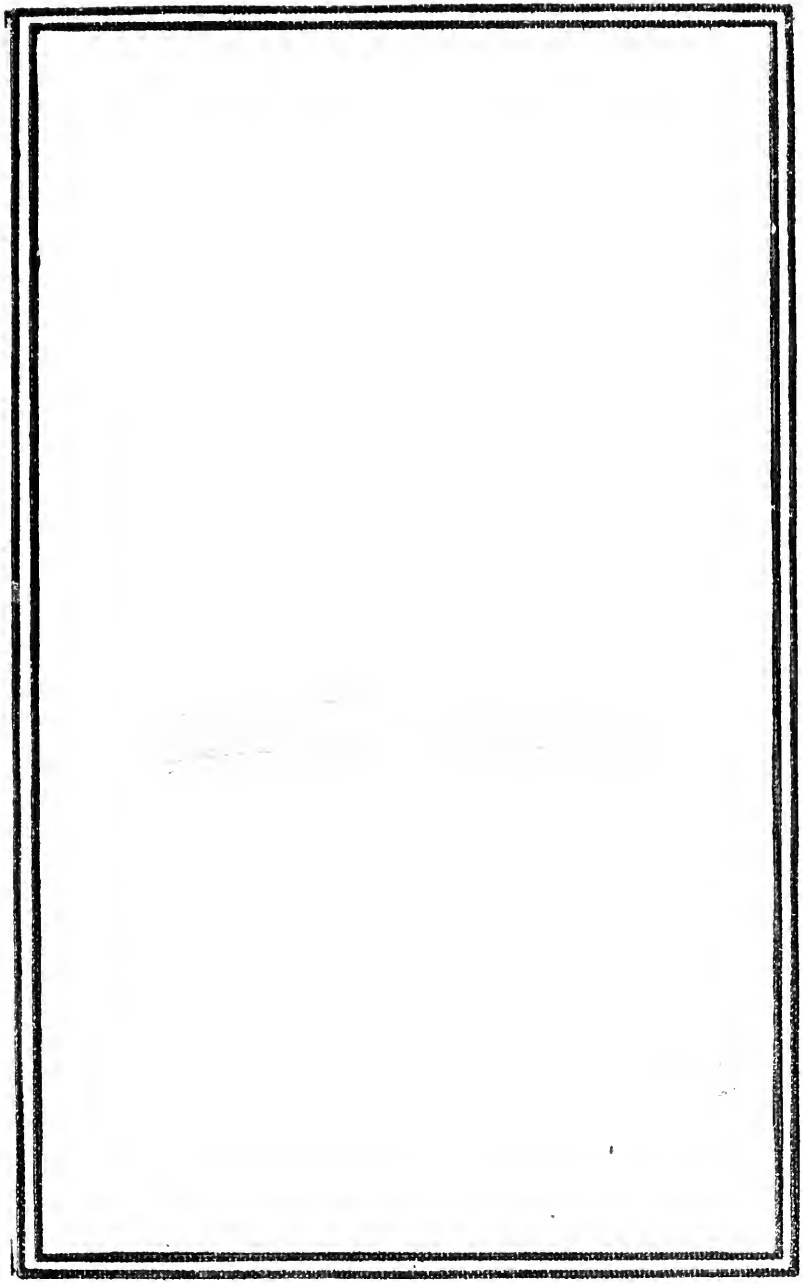

THE RULERS OF THE SOUTH

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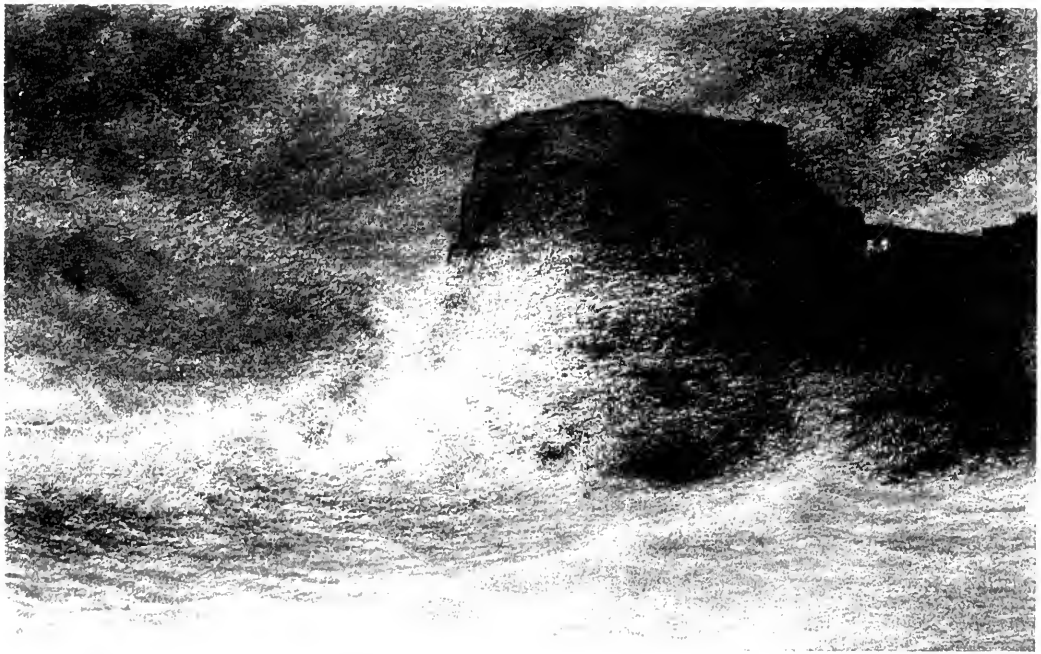

THE

RULERS OF THE SOUTH

SICILY, CALABRIA, MALTA

BY

FRANCIS MARION CRAWFORD

AUTHOR OF "IN THE PALACE OF THE KING," "VIA CRUCIS" "AVE ROMA IMMORTALIS," ETC.

WITH A HUNDRED ORIGINAL DRAWINGS BY HENRY BROKMAN

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. I

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To my friend Henry Brokman, to whose genius I am indebted for the drawings in this book, and whose companionship in Sicily and the South has lightened many labours.

Torre San Nicola Arcella
Calabria,
August, 1900.

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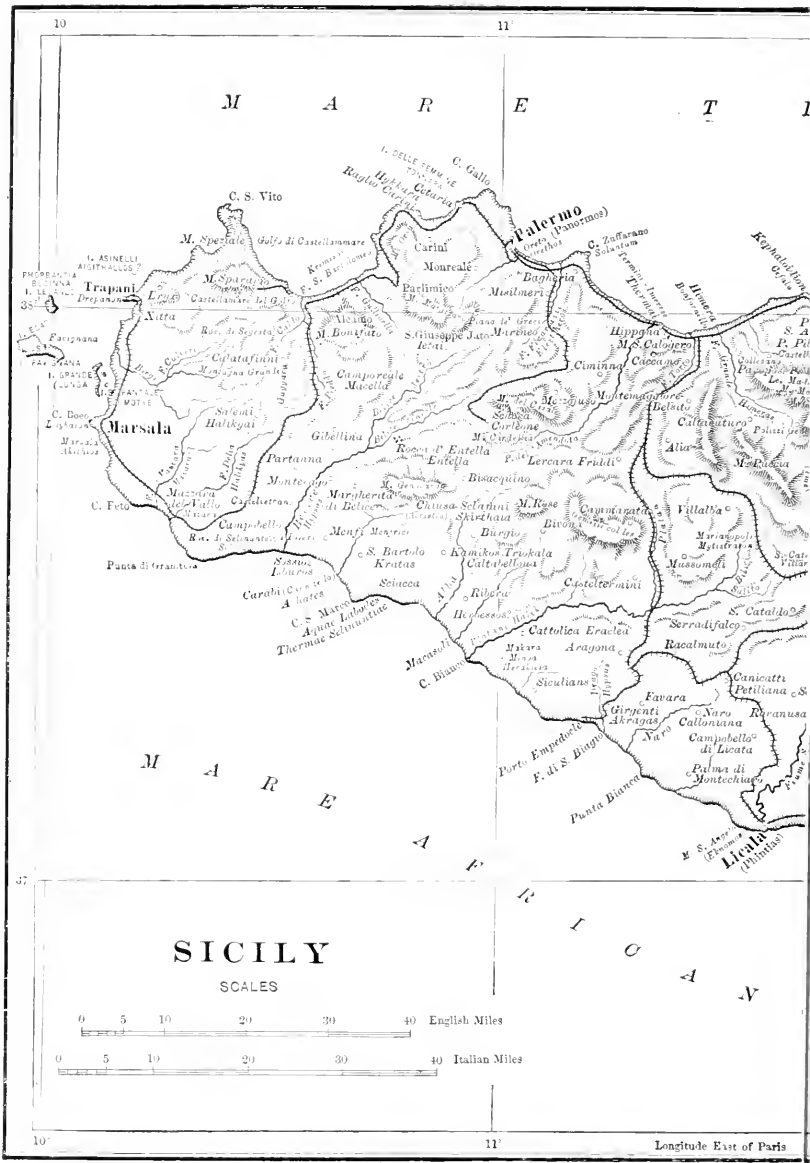

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R E N O
I. VULCANO
Gran Crater
C. di Milazzo
Messina
Messana
Faro
Pelorus
Palmi
Catania
Katane
Aci Castello
Aci Trezza
Aci Reale
Acireale
Etna
Mte Etna
Giarre
Riposto
Taormina
Tauromenion
C. Schiso
(Naxos)
C. S. Alessio
Kokkynos
C. dell' Armi
Leukopetra
Melito
Siracusa
Syrakusa
Plemmyrion
C. Murro di Porco
C. Lognina
C. Negro
Augusta
Xiphonia
Rov. di Mezzara
Lentini
Leontini
Terranova
Gela
Licata
Motyke
Modica
Scicli
Kaukana
Punta Secca
C. Scalambri
(C. Scalambra)
C. Bokra
Vittoria
Comiso
Hybla
Ragusa
Rov. di Kamarina
Pachynos
C. Passero
Odysseus
P. Regilium
P. del Corvo
Mte Argeano
Mte Scuderi
Mte Trigona
Mte Abbatemarco
Mte Soro
Mte Ciappa
Mte Ceraulo
Mte Palma
Mte Rosa
Mte Lauro
Mte Casale
Mte Judica
Mte Lauro
Mte Tauro
Mte Scalpello
Mte Cannamelata
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ETNA AT SUNRISE

The Rulers of the South

I

In very early times, when demigods made history and myth together, heroic beings moved upon the southern land and sea, in shapes of beauty and of

strength, sometimes of terror, that pursued each other, changing and interchanging forms, appearing and disappearing, rising from the waters as a mirage and sinking into the bosom of the earth, then springing into life again elsewhere in the more vivid day of a nearer reality, half human still but already mortal, to die at the last, to be buried in tombs that endure, and to leave names behind them which history can neither quite accept nor wholly overlook.

First, ancient Kronos is the kindly god of the golden age in all Italy, but changes in Sicily to Baal-Moloch, grasping tyrant, devourer of human flesh, fortified against mankind in the high places of the earth; and he slays Ouranos, his father, whose blood falls as a fertilizing rain from heaven upon the burning Sicilian earth. Armed with the scythe, he rules in wrath, then fades from existence, and leaves his crooked weapon twice buried in the earth in Drepanon, the sickle of Western Trapani, and in Zancle, the wide reaping-hook of land that guards Messina from the southern storms.

Poseidon next, his son, god of the Mediterranean Sea, smites his trident deep into the uncertain land. He is the father of many heroes, of Trinakros and Sikelos, whose names stuck fast, of giant Polyphemus, of the man-eating Læstrygones, of Eryx, Aphrodite's son; he is the father, too, of great Demeter, who fights forever with fiery Hephæstos for possession of

her rich inheritance, of Demeter, who first taught men to sow corn; while the nymph Ætna, high on her mountain throne, watches the eternal strife, forever umpire of a never-ending war. Still the fight for bread against fire is raging, and in the wild burnt lands between Randazzo and Brontë, the 'thunder-town,' the myth of Hephæstos and Demeter is truth still.

From her springs the lovely fable-allegory of the seed hidden in the earth, dead half the year and half the year alive again. For of Demeter, by Zeus, was born Kore, the 'Maiden,' the girl Persephone, who played in Sicilian fields with maiden Athene and maiden Artemis, and each chose a playground of her own. Athene took Himera, on the north, for hers, and on the east Artemis chose Ortygia in the sea; but Kore loved best the fruitful land of Enna in the island's heart, where violets grew so close and sweet that the Huntress's own hounds could follow no scent there, and the chase ended among the flowers. There Kore wandered, gathering the violets to make a dark blue mantle for her father Zeus, the sky-king; but though the meadows were so fair, the gate of Hades was close at hand, among the trees at the foot of Enna's hill, and thence dark Pluton, master of hell, watched her with glowing eyes, and sprang forward at last and took her in his arms to bear her away. But when he was hard by Syracuse, the nymph Kyane,

Kore's playmate, leapt lightly from the woods and stood in the way as he rushed along, and she prayed with all her heart for her friend's freedom, but could not move the raging god to mercy; so she sank to earth and was lost in her own tears, which made a deep translucent well, the most beautiful of all springs in the world to this day. After that Demeter went out to seek for her lost daughter, and lighted Ætna's fires for a torch, but could not find her, for Kore had eaten the seed of the pomegranate in Pluton's house, and was wedded, and could only come back for half the year. Therefore Zeus gave her Sicily for a wedding gift. By this is fabled the hiding of the seed in the earth, and its return to the upper world in leaf and flower.

Next came mysterious Dædalus, art and skill in person, flying before angry Minos, king of Crete, touching Sicily first and wandering from island to island, beautifying each and leaving in each some stable work to tell that he had passed there; while the Sicanians burned his enemies' ships, and drowned King Minos in the bath, burying him deep, and building above his grave their temple to Aphrodite. Dædalus built great reservoirs and impregnable cities, treasuries for kings and temples for gods, whose images he carved in rare wood, and set them moving with cunning devices hidden within. So, when bread had first been won, and when husbandry had grown

strong in peace, thought and art came likewise, that Sicily might be a perfect home for men. The great legend of Troy embraced the island then. When old Laomedon had sacrificed his daughter Hesione to atone for his broken word, many Trojans fled, or sent away their children secretly, lest like should befall them. Hippotes sent his child Egesta to Sicily, and she loved

ISLES OF THE CYCLOPS, NEAR CATANIA

Crimisos and bore him Acestes, who went back when he was fully grown, and fought for Troy, but returned again and brought with him Elymos, son of Anchises; and this Elymos left his name to the children of Acestes, who were called Elymians. But some say that these were the Elamites of the Bible.

Soon after that came great Ulysses, wandering by sea, when he had dragged his unwilling companions from the shores of the Lotus land; and first he came to the eastern shore of Sicily, where Polyphemus dwelt

among cliffs and caves, pasturing huge sheep, and he was taken with his companions by the giant; but he blinded him and escaped with those who still lived; and the Cyclops tore up great boulders, that were like hills, and sent them whirling after the Greeks, but could not hit them, being quite blind; so the rocks fell into the sea and became three islets, fast and firm to this day. One of them, moreover, is like a vast monster's head rising above the water, and where the eye should be there is a round aperture, through which the light shines brightly from side to side; for which reason it may well be that the Cyclops was made a one-eyed creature in the imagination of early men, as any one may understand who will go to Aci Castello or to Trezza and look at the rocks for himself.

Thence Ulysses sailed by the southern coast, round Sicily, touching here and there, and landing on islands where many adventures befell him, and along the Italian shore, so that his name and fame linked Sicily and Southern Italy with Greece.

Next, still from Troy, came Trojans with Æneas and his fleet, wandering hither and thither, and founding the great temple of Idalian Venus, of Venus Erycina, on Mount Eryx, named after Aphrodite's son; and then Orestes came, crossing to Sicily when he had purged himself of his crime in Rhegium, and he built the temple of Artemis in Mylæ, which is Milazzo, to hold the sacred image he had brought from far away.

So gods and heroes came and went, and left their names upon the south, and some of them found their last resting-places there; and tradition grew out of myth, and history was moulded upon tradition, till the legends would have filled volumes, and gradually con-

ISLES OF THE SIRENS, GULF OF SALERNO

centrated themselves toward the point of transition at which fable becomes fact. Out of it all results clearly the main truth, that from very early times the rich south was a possession for which several races fought one with another, Orientals, Greeks, and peoples who

had come down from Italy, and who were afterwards driven back by degrees into the inner country, the Sicanians and the Sicelians.

The most learned modern historian of Sicily, Adolf Holm, has proved almost conclusively that these two peoples were of common and Italian origin, and came in succession from their Latian home, somewhere near Anxur, which is now Terracina. The Sicanians came first, in small bands of wanderers, leaving many at home, whence afterwards arose the confusion of names, by which the stronger Sicelians were sometimes called Sicanians, but when the latter sailed down in force and took possession, the confusion ceased. The first comers had intrenched themselves in strong passes and had built fortresses on inaccessible heights, as men do who know that they may be easily destroyed. But the Sicelians came in hordes, driven from their homes by the vast immigration of the Pelasgian race when it moved westward and descended into Italy. They were Latins, speaking a Latin language, closely allied with that of the Romans, for they called a hare 'leporis' and a basin 'katinon,' and they named a certain river 'Gela' because the hoar frost settled along the banks more thickly than elsewhere. And so, as Holm says, the Sicelians are proved by their language to have been closely connected with the Latins and the Oscans, and descended from the common Pelasgian stock; and it is clear that they had wandered from the Hæmus

to the Apennines, before they reached the island to which they gave their name, and that in their immigration they had overrun and filled the southern mainland of Italy. Once there, they built all those early cities of which remains exist that are not manifestly Greek; they built ships and sailed out on marauding expeditions, and some of them even attempted to plunder the Egyptians, joining themselves with Tyrrhenians and Sardinians, Achæans and Lycians, as is proved by a hieroglyphic inscription found in Thebes, which tells how two hundred and fifty Sicelians were slain, under King Merenptah, and their hands were struck off and brought to him, twelve hundred years before our era began. It is sure, also, that even for centuries after the Greeks had settled in Sicily, the Sicelians dwelt there still, a flourishing and active race. They were therefore the first permanent element of a Sicilian population, and most probably of the south Italian people also; for Thucydides says that Italus, from whom Italy was supposed to have been named, was king of the Sicelians, and Aristotle states that he taught his pastoral people the more civilized arts of agriculture.

Three epochs stand out from the chaos of myth, legend, and history: the development of farming by the Sicelians, about 1200 B.C., the introduction of commerce with the Phœnicians after that time, and the gradual growth of a higher civilization under the Greeks, from the time of their landing in the eighth

century before the Christian era, until the Carthaginian or Punic wars with Rome, and the subsequent wreck of Greek art and thought under the atrocious governorship of Verres, between 73 and 71 B.C., during which, with the connivance of his father, the senator, he pillaged all Sicily at his will.

The Roman rule became in the fourth century the rule of Constantinople, and next in history, when the Goths had ruled for a time, the Arabs began to take Sicily, in the year 827 A.D.; the Normans came after them, completing their conquest of the island in 1091, and through them the German Imperial house of Hohenstaufen, reigning from the fifth year before the preaching of the first Crusade, until the downfall of the Ghibellines in 1268. Then the French, under Charles of Anjou, during the few years that ended in the Sicilian Vespers, in 1282, after which the Sicilians chose for their king Peter of Aragon, and because both he and Charles of Anjou continued afterwards to call themselves kings of Sicily, the two kingdoms of Sicily and Naples became known from that time as the 'two Sicilies,' and were still so called under Ferdinand the Catholic, after Naples was annexed to Aragon, and both became Spanish monarchies. In 1700 began the war of the Spanish succession, after which Victor Amadeus of Savoy was king of Sicily for a time, until Sicily and Naples were again united under Charles the Third of the house of Bourbon.

Last of all, in 1860, the two Sicilies were united to the modern Kingdom of Italy.

All these, through nearly three thousand years, were Rulers of the South in turn, Sicelians, Phœnicians, Greeks; Romans, Byzantines, Goths, and Arabs; Normans, German Emperors, and French; Spaniards of Aragon and of Bourbon, and Savoyard Kings of Italy. Every great race that has won rights on the shores of the Mediterranean Sea has, without an exception, sooner or later called the south its own, and has left the broad mark of full possession on the country, where it may still be seen, sometimes grotesque and sometimes grand, now rough, now beautiful, now vulgar, but always very strong and clear, as if the south had been a most cherished possession which each hoped to hold forever. There is no part of Europe which has been dominated by a greater number of different races, and none where each has left such deep traces of its domination. The Goths and Vandals are the only people who ever held the south for a time and left no sign of their presence; but their holding was short, and their occupation was followed by a disappearance so sudden that their brief rule never earned the designation of a kingdom.

The Italian south differs in one prime condition from all the other countries that open upon the Southern Sea. It has never at any time been the independent arbitrator of Europe or of civilization, and it has been

held in succession by those powers that have ruled the rest, or most strongly influenced them, from very early times. Greece held it, and Imperial Rome, the wide-spreading Arab and Saracen domination, the all-grasping Normans, the Holy Roman Empire, and France and Spain. It has never been the source of an individual power that began in it, spread from it, and enveloped others. It has lacked strength of its own from the beginning, it has lacked the genius without which strength breeds monsters, it has been wanting in the original character which bears modification but resists extirpation, it has produced no race which another has not been able to enslave; one people after another has taken possession of it, each amalgamating in some degree with the last, but the welding of races has not become a great race, nor has any first element outlasted and outruled the others. It has been the prize of contending warriors, it has been the playground of magnificent civilizations, but it has neither acted the part of conqueror itself, nor has it ever produced a civilization of its own. It has resembled Greece and Rome, Arabia and Spain, in language, institutions, and manners, but its people have never gone forth in the flesh or in the spirit to impose upon others a resemblance to themselves. In the balance of the world's forces Sicily has been feminine and reproductive rather than masculine and creative; endowed with supreme natural beauty, she

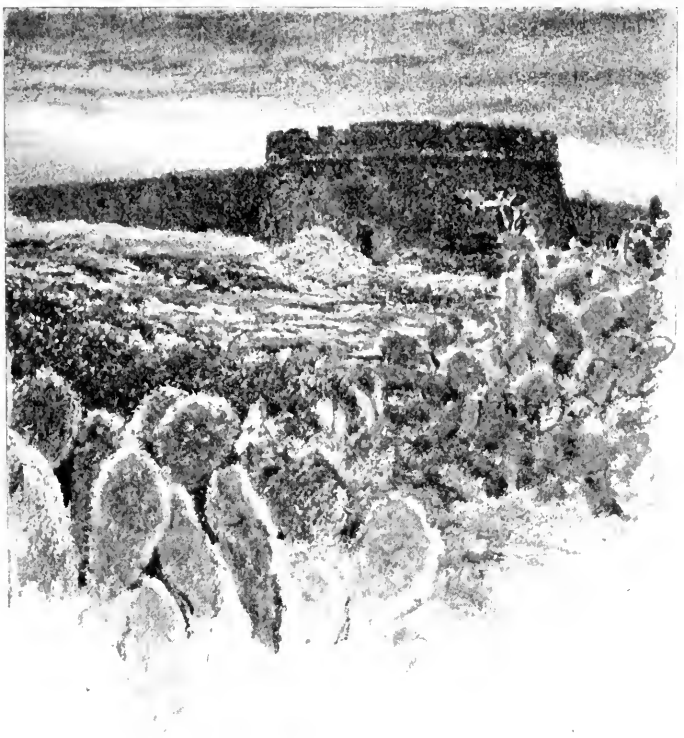
has been loved by all, she has favoured many, and she has borne sons to a few, sons such as Archimedes and Theocritus, Dionysius and Agathocles, King Roger and Frederick Second of Hohenstaufen, of Greek, Norman, and Norman-German blood. But if we ask for a great man whom we may call a Sicilian, we must ask what Sicilians were, and we shall receive different answers in different ages,—Greeks, Arabs, Normans, Spaniards, and Italians have all been Sicilians at one time or another.

At the first glance it might be thought that the result in history must be confusing and often disconnected, breaking off at a point to begin again at another with little or no apparent connexion, so as to present a series of detached episodes without logical sequence, and consequently without consecutive interest. But this is not at all the truth. That has been the case in some parts of the world, as in the plains of Central Asia, where one horde of invaders has succeeded and exterminated another of which it knew nothing, learned nothing, and desired nothing except plunder. The connexion between the Chinese Mongols and the Turanian Tartars, for instance, is not any closer, beyond the bounds of China, than that between white men and red Indians in America. But in the story of Sicily the continuous, reasonable cause of change lies in the unmatched attraction of Sicily, a charm so strong and lasting as to be a source of

interest in itself, so that we may figure the island as the undying heroine of an unending romance, wooed, won, and lost by many lovers who have met and fought and have conquered, or have been vanquished in the struggle for the possession of her beauty. Sicily has been the Helen of a European Epos.

The southern mainland has for the most part served only as a stepping-stone to the conquest of the island. Pyrrhus, called over by the Greeks to help them, crossed the straits; Alaric meditated the passage, but withdrew, and Genseric took Sicily from Africa, but Roger the Norman and Charles of Anjou went over as conquerors of all the south. Yet in many respects Southern Italy has never been far behind the most coveted spot in the Mediterranean; there is great natural beauty in the mainland and great wealth of soil, and such climate as is hardly to be found elsewhere; there, too, the Greeks built marvellous temples to their gods, and there thinkers, philosophers, poets, and soldiers have been reared of successive races; Horace himself was of the south, and so was Zeno of Elea, founder of the great Eleatic school. Tarentum lost all manliness and vigour in a delicacy of thought and manners that outdid the refinements of Syracuse, and the civilization of Greece trained its growth of beauty like a climbing rose from tower to tower. But in spite of all, the mainland never rivalled Sicily in art or

thought or war; in the vast construction of empires Lucania, Apulia, Calabria, were never names to conjure with, nor were they ever numbered among the



OLD FORTIFICATION IN MANFREDONIA

kingdoms of fable, wherein godlike shapes of terror and of loveliness figured the drama of nature in immortal allegory. They were not divided from the

world by the mystery of the moving sea nor hidden from it by the morning mist of the straits, nor brought to it in the magic mirage of the Fairy Morgana. There was no secret in them for men to learn at risk of life, there was no marvel in the thought of them; they were among the world's commonplaces, and every one might go to them and live in them who chose. It was not until the middle ages substituted romantic tragedy for classic myth that the inaccessible mountains of the south were filled with a sort of mysterious interest which they have not yet wholly lost.

The story of the Rulers of the South is as much a history of places as of the persons whose character marked them and left them as they are, since almost throughout history it was the nature of the places themselves which played so great a part in the lives of those who coveted them, grasped them, and ruled them, or who dwelt in them and made them famous. We cannot easily imagine Syracuse without Dionysius the Elder, nor Dionysius without Syracuse, nor would any one ever think of Theocritus as a poet of the mainland. The great story of Roger the Norman moves towards Palermo as the sun to the splendour of its setting, and Charles of Anjou is better remembered by the awful Vespers of the Church of the Holy Ghost than by the long life of struggle, conquest, and murder which won him a kingdom and founded a long-lived dynasty.

It is true that in such a narrative it is necessary to return again and again to the same places, and to cross the same ground many times; but in successive ages the cities of the south, while many of them have kept their names, have so changed that it is hard to recognize them as the same; and each of them is therefore not one but many, all of which must be seen in imagination and understood, as far as possible, in order to form a clear and reasonable idea of the whole as it was and is.

Before going any further, however, it is necessary that the reader should have a general conception of the extraordinary country in which the events took place which are hereafter to be narrated.

Southern Italy is little more than a range of volcanic mountains which rise abruptly from the sea on the west side and descend on the east in a succession of fertile tablelands, the lowest of which is a vast foreshore only slightly raised above the level of the Adriatic. There is not a single natural harbour, really deserving the name, on the whole coast of the southern mainland, from the Gulf of Naples on the west to Manfredonia on the eastern side. The nearest approach to one is perhaps Tarentum, and it early owed its prosperity to the nature of the land, which there afforded tolerable shelter to large vessels before any harbour was constructed. Even at the present day there is no safe port for large ships between

Naples, or Stabian Castellamare, close by it, and the straits. Messina, once called Zancle, the beautiful 'sickle' on the Sicilian side, was therefore the natural place for all vessels to put in that sailed round the coast.

At the extremity of the range which thus forms Southern Italy, and divided from it by a channel little more than two miles wide, lies Sicily, a mountainous,

MARE PICCOLO AT TARANTO, — THE HARBOUR OF ANCIENT TARENTUM

three-cornered island over five hundred miles in circumference by straight lines, and over six hundred, if one closely follows the irregular coast. Viewed from the sea, the island appears almost everywhere as a vast assemblage of rocky peaks which often fall abruptly away in huge cliffs and bluffs. Only on parts of the eastern and southern side do the hills recede some distance so that rich plains open to the sea; but all round the coast the mountains are broken at intervals

by deep valleys that lead to others at a higher level in the interior, and there are more safe natural harbours on the northern and eastern sides of the island, from Trapani at the western extremity to Syracuse near the southeastern corner, than are to be found on an equal extent of coast line in any part of the world. The history of Sicily has been largely the history of those harbours and of those who held them; and as the size and draught of ships increased with the development of navigation under the Romans, after the Punic wars, the importance of the harbours grew likewise, while the cities on the southern side that possessed at most half-sheltered sandy beaches on which small vessels could be hauled up high and dry, steadily lost value, and did not recover until the construction of artificial harbours in modern times supplied what was deficient in nature.

The fertility of Sicily is proverbial, and seems incredible when one considers how large a part of the island consists of high mountains. It is hard for one bred in the north to realize that in southern latitudes a mountain five thousand feet high may be richly cultivated to its very summit; it is even harder to understand that the climate and soil are such that certain plants bear two crops in the year without exhausting the land, after three thousand years of cultivation; it is hardest of all, perhaps, to believe that the old-fashioned methods of agriculture, originally introduced

by the Greeks, are really the best adapted to the country, as well as to the genius of a people possessed of unbounded industry and vast traditional experience, but wholly unlearned in the ways of modern science.

Let it be considered that out of six millions of acres,

LIGHTHOUSE AT COLOMBAIA, HARBOUR OF TRAPANI

barely one hundred and fifty thousand are barren; that the soil will bear anything, from wheat and barley to the orange, the lemon, the date palm, and the banana, from the papyrus to the manna-ash, from cotton and sumach to the carob and the Indian fig; that at a short distance below the surface lie the most valuable

sulphur mines in the world, as well as excellent mines of rock salt; that the finest fisheries in the whole Mediterranean exist upon the coast; and finally that the most valuable coral is found in the same waters. Consider these few facts and it becomes plain that Sicily is one of the richest islands in the world, well worth the endless struggle for its possession that has been waged by a dozen different races since the beginning of all history. There is probably not to be found anywhere an equal area of land of the same value, not containing mines of diamonds, gold, or silver. The mainland opposite is very different. The plains to the eastward are indeed prosperous agricultural regions, but they are nowhere as fruitful as the island, nor do they produce any such variety of crops; and the mountains of Southern Calabria consist for the most part of barren rocks among which a few herds of goats can hardly find a precarious pasture. Sicily has been called the granary of Rome and the garden of the Mediterranean; no such epithets have ever been applied to Calabria or Apulia.

It is commonly said that the population of the eastern and southern portions of the island is of Greek descent, while the strongest traces of the Arab race are found in the central and western parts, and in a general way the statement is true. It is true also that the predominating type on the southern mainland is Greek rather than Latin. Both in Sicily

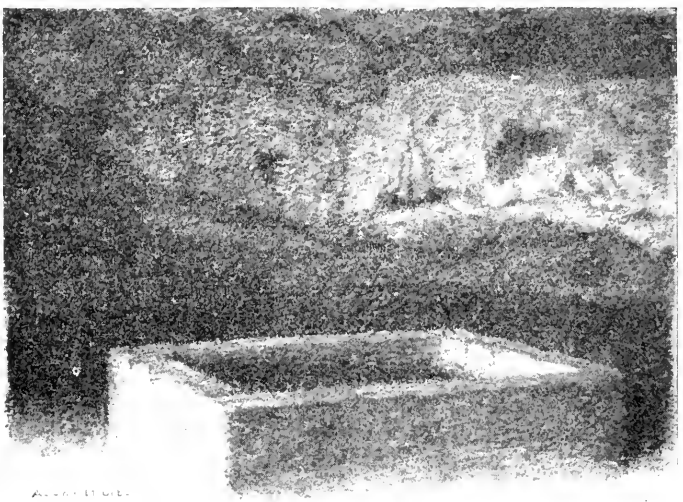
and on the mainland there are still villages where only Greek is spoken and Italian is learned at school as a foreign language; and in the Maltese islands, only sixty miles south of Sicily, the modern tongue is Arabic, so far as it can be said to be anything definite. It is not more remarkable that Arabic should have wholly disappeared from Italian territory than that it should have been altogether lost in lower Spain. The absence of a social constitution in the Arab nation is the reason for the short endurance of its language, manners, and faith wherever it has become subject to a people more advanced in this respect. It has left us much of its art, and its profound genius laid the foundations of modern science, in mathematics, chemistry, and astronomy; but it has left nothing of itself behind it, and it is much harder for any one who has not lived in the East to evoke even a faint picture of Arab life in Palermo, than it is to call up very vividly the sights of Greek Syracuse under Dionysius or Agathocles. The point is one that deserves the consideration of the student of ethics, but it is worth noticing that the same truth applies to the Semitic Phœnicians, who, perhaps, did more for civilization at large than all the Pharaohs together, but whose surviving image in the imagination of modern man is as vague as that of the Egyptians is bright and sharply defined. We may recall one more striking instance in the Goths,

another people of whom it cannot be said that they had a definite social constitution, who held all Italy for a hundred years, and left few signs of their presence after them except the graves in which they were laid.

The main influences that have worked upon the south have been Greek, Roman, Arabic, and Norman, of which the Roman is the one least strongly noticeable at the present day, and even, perhaps, in earlier centuries. For, in the south, the Romans themselves lost character, and their decided taste for Greek art and manners hellenized them into insignificance. When their reign was over, the Goths dominated them and the Arabs made slaves of them. They had accepted and imitated all they had found, and they were themselves wiped out of social existence by those who conquered them; yet their works remain, often gigantic and sometimes not without a certain borrowed Greek grace, and we have no more difficulty in fancying how they lived and ruled and worked in Agrigentum, than in Rome itself. Yet, to speak figuratively and familiarly, we do not 'see' the Romans when we think of Sicily, excepting perhaps Verres and his train of satellites, and though we must follow their history, we do not wish to 'see' them more than is necessary to an understanding of their position in the succession of the rulers. We are chiefly concerned with the Greeks, the Arabs,

and the Normans. That far-reaching Spanish domination which attained the height of its power in the sixteenth century was a part of modern history upon which the limits of this work will not allow us to dwell.

What has here been said by way of introduction shall not afterwards be repeated. The sum of it, in



SPRING CALLED THE "FONTE DEL SOLE," IN A GROTTO NEAR TARANTO

brief, is this: For three thousand years Sicily has been looked upon as the fairest among all the richly endowed lands that border on the Mediterranean Sea or lie as islands within it, a sort of earthly paradise, to obtain which no sacrifice could be thought too great; its claim to be so esteemed can be established

by the short proof of any thoughtful man's first glance, even to the present day; its history is the narrative of fierce struggles fought by great and manly races for its possession, and is told in monuments and ruins still to be seen. It is of all lands the one in which the most enthralling romance is interwoven with the most stirring fact, for it has always been the debatable country where fact has met romance and vied with it for supremacy. It is much talked of, yet few travellers visit it, and those who do so see it through much misunderstanding and often at great disadvantage. Its history is confused by an enormous number of small details, and by such endless accounts of insignificant personages and of minor actions, that the main stream of interest is diverted into a thousand channels where no single rivulet has much strength or beauty left; and sometimes all the channels are quite dry. For Sicily has been the favourite ground of the specialist for a long time, and in the specialist's minute work the smallest detail may possess for him the very highest importance.

It is the writer's aim, in this book, to give a simple and true account of the successive dominations by which Sicily and the south of Italy have sometimes prospered and sometimes suffered from the days of the early Greek settlers down to the establishment of the house of Aragon.

The Greeks

It is no wonder that the Greeks were seamen and wanderers on the sea. With little more than twice as much land as Sicily, Greece has a coast line equal to that of all Spain and Portugal together. Moreover, every strong race that has reached the sea in the migration of peoples has sooner or later attempted to sail westward, like Ulysses in his last voyage, beyond the baths of all the western stars, and the Greeks were almost driven from their own shore by the press of those behind them, when their little country was filled to overflowing. So they began to spread and multiply in the islands of the Mediterranean, and certain of the bolder among them reached Italy and passed the straits, whence, sailing up the dangerous western coast, they came to the safe waters of Cumæ, protected from storms by the island of Ischia; and there they founded a colony which was the beginning of Naples. Some of them, it is said, turned pirates and found their way back to Sicily.

They were very perfect men, and could do all and bear all that could be done and borne by human flesh and blood. Taking them altogether they were the most faultlessly constructed human beings that ever lived, and they knew it, for they worshipped bodily beauty and strength, and they spent the lives of generations in the cultivation of both. They were

fighting men, trained to use every weapon they knew, they were boxers and wrestlers, athletes, runners and jumpers, and drivers of chariots; but above all, they were seamen, skilled at the helm, quick at handling sails, masters of the oar, and fearless navigators when half of all navigation led sooner or later to certain death. For though they loved life, as only the strong and the beautiful can love it, and though they looked forward to no condition of perpetual bliss beyond, but only to the shadowy place where regretful phantoms flitted in the gloom as in the twilight of the Hebrew Sheol, yet they faced dying as fighters always have and always will, with desperate hands and a quiet heart.

Their ships were small craft, much more like the little vessels in which the Greeks and Sicilians sail to-day, than those are like the vessels of the ocean. The first condition for safety was that their ships might be easily hauled up high and dry on any sandy beach, by means of such gear as they could carry with them; the second, that they should be very swift under the oar. The Norsemen who reached the Western Ocean needed the same qualities in their vessels; hence the resemblance between the old viking's ship and the southern felucca of our own time. Both are long, narrow, and of small draught, flat-bottomed amidships, yet sharp as a knife both fore and aft. The Greek ship, like the Norseman's, carried but one mast and one

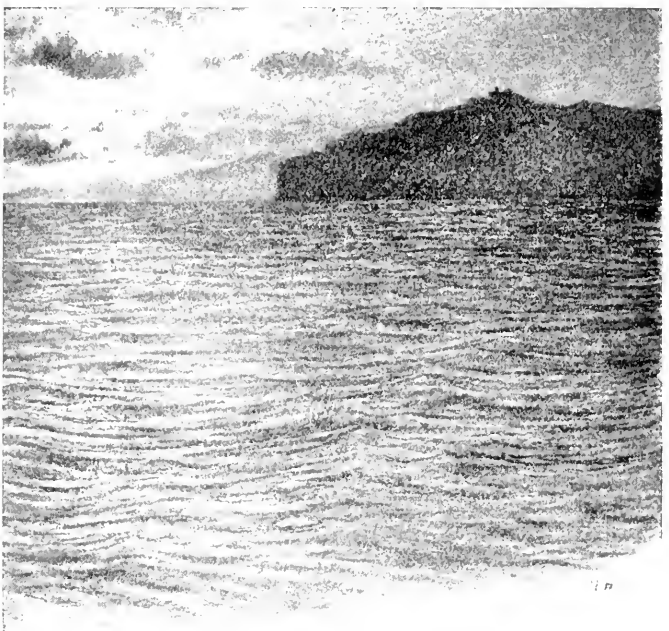
great sail that was furled whenever the wind was not free, so that the only means of motion lay in the sweeps, steadily swung and pulled by free men or slaves, as the case might be, sometimes from dawn to sunset.

Men rarely put to sea in one ship alone for any distant voyage. They sailed out in little fleets of ten, or even twenty sail, well knowing that some should not come home, and trusting in the number of their vessels to save some of their companions from death by drowning. As Holm quietly observes, when speaking of Ulysses, men did not travel for pleasure in those days.

When the Greek sailors were not pirates who got a living by robbing the Phœnician traders, they traded themselves, from Greece to Asia Minor and among all the rich Greek islands. They loaded their little ships on shore, covered the cargo with ox-hides battened down in the narrow water-ways to keep the stuff dry, they launched their vessels with the cargo in them, and they lived on deck, sleeping as they could in the open air, or making awnings of skins when they could anchor for the night in some natural harbour, or when with infinite labour they were obliged to beach their vessels on lonely shores before a coming storm. It was a rough life, and often they had to fight in self-defence, when weather-bound in barbarous places; but most men carried their lives in their hands in

those times, and few looked forward to dying of old age.

A certain Theocles, whom some call Thucles, an Athenian, traded with Italy in the eighth century



CAPE PALINURO, GULF OF POLICASTRO

before Christ, and no doubt had been as far as Cumæ, where the Greeks had settled. But neither he nor any other Greeks had landed in Sicily, for the Sicelians had a bad name in the south, and it was said that they devoured human flesh and destroyed every one who

tried to land upon their shores, so that other men left them in peace for a long time; and it is most likely that the Phœnicians, who traded with them, and even had settlements in Malta, and perhaps in Western Sicily, and who themselves offered up human sacrifices, spread this tale through the East to frighten off other trading folk.

But Theocles, the merchant, with his little fleet of vessels, was sailing near the straits one summer day, hugging the Italian shore, when the northeast wind came upon him, suddenly and violently, as it does in those waters, and he could not beat up against it to an anchorage under the land, but was obliged to run before it, towards Sicily; for it was wiser to take the risk of being eaten by the Sicelians than to face certain drowning in vessels that would not lie to in a gale. So he wore his ships to the wind under such sail as he dared carry and ran for the opposite land with a heavy sea following. It is very likely that two or three of his fleet were swamped and sank with all on board, though a felucca will run safely before weather that would be dangerous to many larger craft. Theocles offered prayers to Apollo, and kept the helm up.

Seeing that the wind was northeast, and that Sicily was a lee shore, he knew that his chance of safety and life lay in running under the only little headland that juts out from that part of the coast, and he succeeded in making the shelter in time, before the wind shifted to

the eastward. The sea broke over him just as he rounded the point, but its force drove him on and into smooth water, where he came to and let go both anchors. One by one his companions followed him and anchored alongside, and the first Greeks proceeded to land, where they afterwards built Naxos and Tauromenium, on the soft beach of yellow sand below the little town now called Taormina, which many say is the most beautiful spot in the whole world.

It is not possible, as some traditions say, that Theocles should have landed in the sandy cove under Cape Schisò, and should have built his altar to Apollo on the spot where Saint Pancras's statue now stands; for the only storm which could have driven him across from Italy to the Sicilian shore was a northeaster; an easterly or southeasterly gale would have either swamped him or sent him up the straits, and when the wind is in the northeast, Cape Schisò affords no shelter, though there is smooth water a mile to the northward under Cape Sant' Andrea, and a little islet there protects the beach. So Theocles must have landed there, and there he doubtless proceeded to beach his vessels, heavy laden as they were, well knowing that the wind would shift to the dangerous southeast before the bad weather was over. It is most likely that he built his altar on the island, since he feared the Sicelians, and would feel safer if protected from them even by a narrow bit of shallow water; and on it he and his companions sacri-

ficed with a little meal and wine, which was all they had, and they prayed that their lives might be spared, not dreaming that they should reach Greece again in safety, and return a second time, and build a city which should endure for ages, and be the near forerunner of a vast Greek colonization.

Instead of a race of cannibals, rushing down from the hills to kill them for food, the Greeks found a peaceable farmer folk, well satisfied with themselves and others, who sauntered down to the shore and eyed the weather-bound strangers with benevolent curiosity. From a distance they must have seen their ships, and understood at once that these were not of Phœnician build; and they could see too, before they descended to the shore, that the newcomers were neither pirates nor soldiers, but peaceable merchants driven in from the sea for shelter. It is easy to fancy the distrust of Theocles and his companions, and the simple plan they followed; how they allured the Sicelians by holding up specimens of their merchandise, coloured stuffs, glass beads, and bits of tinsel-ware that caught the eye, just as English sailors made friends of South Sea islanders two thousand years later. The Greeks could not speak the Sicelian tongue, but they conversed in the universal dialect of all commercial enterprise, the language of exchange, and for their wares they obtained fresh supplies, and by and by the natives sat down by the Greek camp fires while the great storm lasted, and they ate and drank together and talked by signs.

Sitting there on the beach below Taormina, and wandering along to the southward, the strangers saw the rich foreshore full of trees and running springs of good water; their eyes followed the stubble fields up the rising ground, where the plentiful corn had last been harvested, to the vinelands beyond, where the scarlet leaves still clung to the gnarled vine-stocks after the vintage; further up there were silver-green olives, and higher still the rich, dark foliage of carob trees, and all was very fertile and good. They bought wine also of the Sicelians, which was strong and almost black, and had a flavour of its own, unlike all other wines. They sacrificed at sunrise and at evening, but not every day; and the Sicelians stood apart at a little distance and watched how the strangers dealt with their strange gods, and listened to the musical Greek voices when they sang a hymn to Phœbus Apollo. But the Greeks looked over at the vast smoking mountain to the southward and dared not wander far in that direction, lest the fire god should be angry with them, though the Sicelians smiled and tried to make them understand that there was no danger; for Ulysses seemed as real and well remembered to Theocles as Columbus seems to us; and the Athenians believed that blind Polyphemus still wandered, bellowing for light, about the foot of Etna, and that the smoke they saw still came from Vulcan's smithy, and that all manner of monstrous and half godlike beings dwelt in the little valleys round

about. So Theocles would not let his companions wander far away. But in the evening, when the Sicelian farmers had gone to their dark huts, and the Greeks lay on skins around the blazing camp fire on the beach, while the southerly storm howled far overhead from over the mountains, they told each other that the land was good and the people mild, and that a few hundred Greeks could easily hold their own there, if only they could get possession of the first hill above the shore, and a little to the northward, on which Taormina now stands. There would be little difficulty about that, since the Sicelians dwelt mostly in the valleys. Their real danger was from Polyphemus and the Læstrygones, and Hephæstos, and they therefore sacrificed continually to Apollo, the protector of colonists and the giver of victory.

The storm may have lasted a week, and when it was over, and the sea rippled gently to the breeze under the quiet sunlight, Theocles launched his ships and sailed away, not without leaving gifts to the hospitable Sicelians. As soon as he reached Athens, he began to speak of the rich country he had seen, telling that the people were well disposed, and that it would be easy to get a broad strip of land, and hold it against all comers; but no one would listen to him, or if any noticed what he said, they answered that it would be unwise to disturb Polyphemus, or to run the risk of angering Hephæstos, and that moreover they did not believe

anything that he said; which was a favourite refutation of argument among the Athenians. Then Theocles went over to Chalcis in Eubœa, and told his story; and there he found hearers and men very restless with the spirit of the sea, who had sailed far, and wished to sail farther, and who preferred trading and wandering to staying at home, and liked fighting better than either. But they were not godless men, and before going upon the expedition they consulted the oracle of Apollo, and the god promised them his protection and a prosperous voyage and all good fortune. Then some other Ionians and certain Dorians joined themselves to the Chalcidians with more ships, and in the spring a whole fleet of vessels sailed westward, laden with all sorts of necessary things, and Theocles piloted them safely to the very point where he had found shelter the first time; but instead of waiting by the shore, he led his people up the hill by the easy declivities that are almost like artificial terraces, one above another, and took possession of the strong crest on which the theatre now stands. No doubt Theocles dealt in a friendly way with the Sicelians, especially at first; but they were a humble and peaceable folk who looked with admiration upon the Greeks and with mild covetousness on their possessions, and were quite willing to part with a little land in exchange for a few shining toys of glass and tinsel. Besides, it does not appear that the Greeks, who were after all but a few, had come with any idea of seizing a

wide territory and enslaving the inhabitants to work for them. They had come, rather, to establish an outpost trading station whence they could export the produce of the rich island in the way of regular commerce, and the Sicelians soon found that instead of being a thorn in their side, the young city of Naxos, which Theocles founded to the southward of the hill, was a profitable market for their corn and wine and oil.

Seeing how easy it was to settle and take possession of a site for a city, some of the Dorians who were with Theocles took courage to face the dangers of the fire mountain and the anger of Polyphemus, and they sailed farther southward, along the coast, till they came to the beautiful natural harbour which is now Augusta, but which they called Taurus, at the foot of the Hyblæan hills, and there they founded Megara Hyblæa, in remembrance of Megara in the Dorian country, between Attica and the isthmus of Corinth. There, from the end of a low promontory, a tongue of land runs due south and almost encloses a sheet of still water, where ships may lie in all weathers; and there the foreshore is deep and fertile, being that lower extremity of the great plain of Catania which sweeps round the base of Mount Thymbris and terminates in the jutting land at Trogilos, just north of Syracuse.

Swiftly the news went back to Greece that the colony was successful and that its wealth was already increasing, and within two years the great western movement

of the Greeks had begun, and the fate of the Sicelians on the coasts of Sicily was decided forever. Archias, the rich Heraclid of Corinth, whose evil passion had brought about the riot in which beautiful Actæon was killed, was a fugitive and an exile before gods and men, and he collected together his wealth, his people and his servants, and sailed forth to found lordly Syracuse; and within a few years the Chalcidians and Ionians got possession of Catania and Leontini — the broad meadow lands where the Læstrygones had been supposed to dwell; and Achæans had come to the mainland and had founded Sybaris in the soft Italian gulf, and Crotona, which is now Cotrone, soon taking possession of all that is now Calabria and building Metapontum, Poseidonia, and Terina. The Messenians of the Peloponnesus also built Rhegium on the Italian side of the straits, and somehow their name afterwards crept across the narrow water, and Zancle came to be called Messana and then Messina. The Ionians also got round to the north side of Sicily and founded Himera, and after that came Dorians from the island of Rhodes and built Gela, which is Terranova on the Gela, the 'gelid' river of the Sicelians; and nearly a hundred years later the same people got possession of Akragas, which became Agrigentum, and which is Girgenti to-day. The Megarian Dorians also founded Selinus, near Western Lilybæum, and there one may yet see the most unimaginable mass of ruins that exists in Europe, for the earthquake that

destroyed it left not one stone upon another, and buried none.

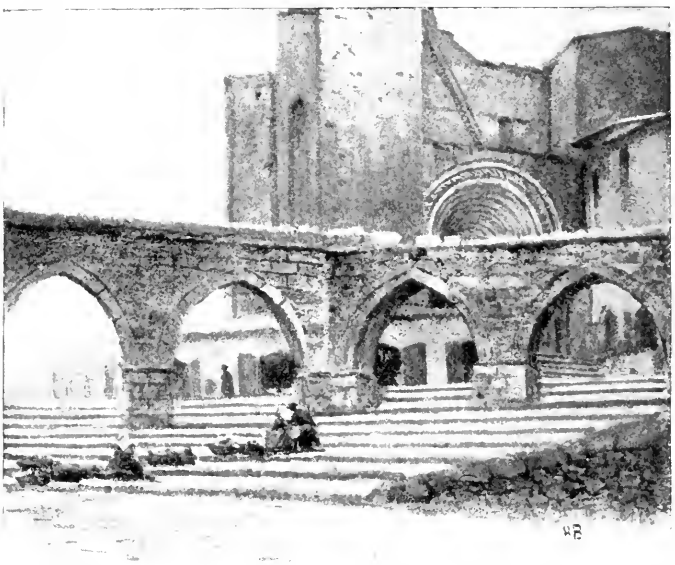
In a hundred and fifty years the Greeks had got possession of the south, including all the mainland from Cumæ near Naples, to the straits, and all the coast of Sicily from Himera on the north, not far from Palermo, round by the east and south sides to westward as far as Selinus. In Sicily the Phœnician traders had been gradually pushed to the west till their settlements only extended along about a hundred and fifty miles of the coast, though at that part of the island which was most convenient to them, as being nearest to Carthage. After they had got what they could of the south without very much fighting, the Greeks pushed further to the north and west, attempted to form a colony in Corsica and failed, and finally founded Massilia, now Marseilles.

Though the extent of territory which they occupied in a short time seems very great, it must be remembered that in reality they at first only held the coasts, and that both on the mainland and in Sicily they pushed the original people into the interior, where the Sicelians and Italians for a long time pursued their original rural occupations in peace and probably with profit, selling their produce to the Greeks, who consumed it in part, and in part exported it. The position of the Greeks in the south at that period was in one respect more like that which was

held for a long time by the East India Company in India, than that of England's trading stations. It differed from it chiefly in that the majority of the Greek colonies were not only independent of each other, but also of the mother country, and had formed themselves into oligarchies, which had succeeded the first small monarchies of the founders, and were followed again by the despotisms of men who rose to the highest places through their own talents and the play of circumstances, like Gelon, Dionysius, and Agathocles. Another great difference lies in the fact that whereas the East India Company was never really a colony, in the ethnological sense, any more than it was politically one, and whereas the Englishmen who founded it, and the thousands who acted as its agents, officers, and fighting men, always looked forward to coming home to England, the Greek colonists settled permanently in new countries, and their cities became active and independent sources of genuine Greek thought, literature, and art.

Corinth alone seems to have kept some hold and influence upon the new settlements formed by her citizens, but in the end that connexion died away also, and at the time of the Athenian invasion all Sicily was entirely separated from the mother country. With regard to the relations between the Greeks and the natives, events followed their usual historical sequence. At first the newcomers spread round the coast, as

they increased, seizing all places most desirable for trade, and driving out other traders as well as the indigenous population. But when the coast was fully occupied, they naturally began to take possession of



ANCIENT AQUEDUCT AT SOLMONA IN THE ABRUZZI, THE BIRTHPLACE OF OVID

the interior, enslaving the peaceable country people by degrees, till they were practically the masters through the length and breadth of Sicily and Southern Italy.

It would be a mistake to look upon the conquest of

the south as a direct consequence of conditions in Greece. It was but an extension of the Hellenic westward movement from Asia Minor, which had settled Greece itself, and which filled all the eastern Mediterranean and ultimately spread into Spain. The whole race, continually fed by emigration from its place of origin in Asia, was moving towards the setting sun, as the Semite Phœnicians had moved before it, and it was with the latter people that it engaged in its first great struggle for existence in the west, at the very time when the mother country was fighting for life against the invasion of the Persian host. For the westward migration was itself caused by the awakening of the Asian races, that culminated in the conquests of Nebuchadnezzar, Cambyses, Cyrus, and Darius, which was checked at Salamis, and was ultimately thrown back upon itself and annihilated by the Greek Alexander the Great.

We are too apt to think of those early times as barbarous and uncultivated compared with those of Pericles. We forget the vast civilization of Egypt, whose empire, in the seventh century before our era, was hastening to its decline, but whose culture was the model of all cultures then existing, and was looked up to by the Phœnician and the Babylonian alike, as well as by the Greeks themselves, who slavishly imitated Egyptian art for centuries, and surrounded with profoundest mystery the few poor

secrets of nature they succeeded in stealing from the rich treasures of Egyptian learning. Many do not remember that Babylon was at that time the greatest city in the world, and was enclosed within walls that measured thirty-six miles in circuit, the chief stronghold of a power that overshadowed all central and western Asia. One should recall the existence of enormous libraries of learning, of hundreds of thousands of books, written in Egypt on papyrus, in Assyria on clay tiles, which were afterwards hardened by baking and coloured with many tints, each of which was distinctive of some branch of learning and thus contributed to the easy classification of the whole. Nor should it be forgotten that in those days the magnificent monuments of the Egyptians were still in the glory of perfect preservation, in Memphis, in Heliopolis, and in Thebes, or that in Babylon the legendary gardens of Semiramis still hung between earth and heaven, supported on a thousand arches, high above the city, but themselves overshadowed by the vast temple of Bel. The Greeks were familiar with Egypt through their trade, and many of them had wandered beyond Palestine to the banks of the Euphrates, and had written down careful accounts of their journeys. The men who settled Sicily and the south of Italy were adventurers, wanderers, and fighting men, but they were very far from uncivilized; more than half of their religion was the worship of

beauty, and if the science they had obtained from Egypt was scanty, their own brilliant intelligence enlightened them in applying it. It is no wonder that within a few years of their settling in the south they became a new nation of artists, poets, and thinkers, actively creative in their own right, as it were, and immeasurably superior in cultivation to all the races with which they came into contact; it is not surprising that Sybaris should have outdone the East in refinement of luxury, nor that strong Crotona should have bred more winners of the Olympic Games than all Greece and all the Greek islands together. The Greek athlete was not the gladiator of later days, the mere 'swordsman,' as the word signifies; he was the result of the thoughtful worship of human beauty, brought to its final expression by natural selection and artificial training; and the winner of the Games was not merely a runner, a wrestler, or a boxer, he was the best man of his day at all bodily exercises whatsoever, and in the eyes of the people that brought him home in triumph he was a visible god, the living incarnation of the Greek spirit. Every race that has beaten the world has at the outset shown a physical as well as a characteristic superiority over its opponents, but in almost every case that superiority has been either unconscious, or has asserted itself with loud boasting and overwhelming brutality. The Greek alone knew how to cultivate and perfect the gifts that

placed him above other men, reverencing his own endowments as something divine within him, and analyzing the secret sources of his own strength, until he had almost found a formula for the production of great men.

At this time appeared one of the most romantic figures in ancient history, the first that deserves especial

AFTER SUNSET ON THE SHORE OF EASTERN CALABRIA

mention in the story of the south, a man of almost superhuman genius, who, had he lived in more ordinary conditions than those which accompanied the first marvellous development of the Greek people, would have become in the west what his contemporaries, Zoroaster, Buddha, and Confucius, became in Persia, in India, and in China. This extraordinary person was Pythagoras,

the Samian philosopher, the son of Mnesarchus, who was a very rich merchant and shipowner, and strange to say, in his moments of leisure, a sculptor of considerable talent.

It is neither a misuse of the term nor an exaggeration of fact to call the great thinker's career a romantic one; for in its original signification the romance was the tale of the 'romare,' of the pilgrim and wanderer; and from 'romare,' derived from, or very closely connected with Rome, as a chief place of pilgrimage, we have made our modern word 'roamer.' If ever a man earned that epithet it was the Samian seeker after knowledge, who, in a life that covered nearly a century, spent but the first eighteen years in his home, who lived twenty-two years in Egypt, twelve in Babylon, and thirty-nine in Italy, who was a pupil of Thales, the favoured guest of Pharaoh, the friend of Zoroaster, and the founder of the great Pythagorean brotherhoods that played so interesting a part in the political and civil history of Southern Italy.

The son of the rich man was taught by Hermodamas, and the tenderest affection grew up between the pupil and his master. The first instruction in those times consisted in the reading and recitation of poetry and in the art of music. Under the rule of Polycrates, Samos was the very centre of Greek art and thought. There lived Ibycus, the love poet born in Italian Rhegium, of whose works beautiful fragments have come down to

us; there Anacreon spent his richest years, but of him little remains, for the Odes are not now believed to be all his work, though they have so long borne his name; there dwelt also Theodorus the younger, the Benvenuto Cellini of his day, famous for the statues he modelled and cast in bronze, and for his marvellous skill at engraving, who made the ring of Polycrates; and last, the great tyrant himself, cunning, cruel, fortunate, a lover of every beautiful art, the despot of the sea, the delight of poets, the friend of Pharaoh, fated to die on the cross at last, like a common malefactor. Such was the court in which the boy Pythagoras grew up to the age of eighteen years, beautiful beyond other youths and gifted of the gods above all his companions. It is a conspicuous fact and one that raises strange reflections concerning modern theories of education, that every supremely great man of antiquity, from myth to legend, from legend to fact, was first taught to recite poetry and make music, and was not instructed in mathematics till he had spent years in the study of both; for it was held that a man who could not write in verse, could not write his own language at all, and that a being for whom musical sounds had no corresponding meaning was a barbarian unfit to associate with his fellows. So Pythagoras, whose famous proposition is the point of departure to which all trigonometry is referred, spent his first youth in playing on the seven-stringed lyre and in declaiming the Homeric poems,

which Pisistratus, the wise ruler of Athens, had very lately collected and finally arranged. Without doubt he sat at the feet of Anacreon, and filled the poet's drinking-cup, listening to the voice that matched the words and to the words no age has ever matched, and doubtless he was beloved by Ibycus and saw Theodorus model gods of clay that were to be cast in bronze and set up in temples to be worshipped by the people; whence he began to understand that there was a faith above belief in idols, and that far beyond the earthly scenery of myth and the play of the beautiful little god-figures there was the All-Being in which all is contained that lives and dies and lives again. So when he was about eighteen years of age his mind was opened, and he began to desire absolute knowledge and to seek after it.

Now at this time Polycrates had not yet attained to the height of his power, and he was enriching himself by extorting money from his wealthy subjects and even by confiscating their goods with slight excuse. Therefore many writers have asserted that Pythagoras fled from Samos to escape from the tyrant's grasping hands, but this is a senseless story, since he was then but a boy and his father and mother remained in Samos and lived in riches for more than twenty years after his departure. It seems to me much more probable that Polycrates had made a law, as many modern despots have done, forbidding young men to leave their country until they had

performed some stated service; and that Pythagoras was in such haste to increase his knowledge that he would not abide the ordained time. So he fled secretly by night with his teacher Hermodamas, who afterwards came back alone and appears to have suffered no penalty. It is very clear that Pythagoras feared pursuit and capture; for though Samos is close to the mainland, and not far from Miletus, where both Anaximander and Thales, or Theletas, as he is sometimes called, were famous philosophers, yet the young man preferred to sail all the way to Lesbos, far to northward, where at that time he was safe from the messengers of Polycrates. There he dwelt with an uncle, a brother of his father, and was taught by Pherecydes for some time; but when he had learned of him what he could, he journeyed southward by land to Miletus, and sat down beside the ancient Thales and began to be initiated into the secret wisdom of the priests.

The mysteries of the ancients were the truth, or the nearest approach to it then possible, as contrasted with the vast fictions of mythology in which the peoples believed. Without an exception, all the mysteries taught of a god who had died and had been buried on earth, and who had returned to life again in glory; most of them foretold a judgment of souls, and all looked forward to a future state, either as following directly upon death, or as the end of a

series of migrations, in which the soul passed from one body to another, purifying itself by degrees, or sinking by steps of defilement to final perdition. All the mysteries were ultimately monotheistic in idea, though the one god of the secret faith was considered as containing two, three, or four principles in himself, according to the ethic and psychic schemes adopted by the initiated of different nations.

The early philosophers were all priests and mystics, most of them were poets, in the sense that they wrote down their thoughts in verse, and all were seekers after knowledge. The highest development, both of mysticism and of scientific inquiry, was considered to have been reached in Egypt, though it has been thought that the Magians of Assyria were better mathematicians than the Egyptian priests, and that the Chaldæans were as good astronomers.

The true faith of those times was a profound secret in the hands of small communities of amazingly gifted men. It could never be popular, for the comprehension required to understand it was far beyond the gifts of the masses, and the consequence was that although initiation into the mysteries was not the exclusive privilege of the aristocratic class, it was nevertheless very closely associated with an aristocratic principle in the minds of the many, a fact which afterwards led directly to the violent destruction of the Pythagorean brotherhoods in Italy.

The intellectual grasp of the young Samian soon took possession of his master's knowledge, and when he had been initiated into the mysteries of Zeus in the temple on Mount Ida, Thales declared that if his pupil would learn more he must find a way to be received among the priests of Egypt. No foreign student had ever accomplished such an apparently impossible thing; but Pythagoras, who admitted no impossibilities, forthwith determined to possess himself of all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and of all learning possessed by men.

That was a period of peace and prosperity in the world. Under Crœsus, Lydia had developed immeasurable wealth, Phœnicia, now under the lordship of Babylon, was recovering from the ravages of Nebuchadnezzar, and Persia had not yet started upon her long career of conquest. Egypt, after a revolution which had placed a man of plebeian extraction upon the throne of the Pharaohs, was enjoying the last years of her splendour under the wise rule of Amasis. In the west the Greeks were spreading mightily, and were quickly developing the strength which first repelled the Carthaginians and soon afterwards proved an impassable barrier to the advance of Xerxes. The known world was rich and at peace, and in the shadow of a hundred ancient temples, from the islands of the Mediterranean to Mount Ida, from Assyrian Babylon and Phœnician Sidon to Egyptian Thebes, the chosen com-

pany of the wise cherished what was wisdom in those days, and followed those patient investigations in mathematics and astronomy to which modern science is so deeply indebted.

It was in Sidon that Pythagoras first became a true mystic, and it was there that he first conceived the idea of uniting and simplifying the many forms of mysticism into one religion which should satisfy at the same time the highest aspirations of the soul and the widest speculations of the intellect, and which should be at once a faultless rule of spiritual life and a perfect guide to man's social existence. The thought was high and noble, for it was the thought which inspired Zoroaster, Buddha, and Confucius, and it foreran the teaching of Christ as the dawn the day.

In order to prepare himself for his mission, Pythagoras felt that he must withdraw himself from the world among the wisest men at that time living. After he had been initiated in Sidon, he wandered down through Phœnicia into Palestine; he gazed thoughtfully upon the ruins of Jerusalem that lay broken to pieces in the dust like a vessel of clay, and he came to Mount Carmel and looked towards Egypt, which was the goal of his desires. So he took ship for the Delta in a small Egyptian trading craft, and the merchant and the sailors saw that he was a Greek, well skilled in learning, and they agreed that they would sell him for a slave in Memphis, where he would fetch a good price.

But he understood what was in their minds and showed no fear, and fixed his eyes upon them until they were afraid under the strength of his look, and gave over their evil designs; so he came safely to Memphis, where Pharaoh dwelt at that time, and where there were many wise priests. But these would have none of him, for he was a foreigner, and they thought that he wished to learn their secrets only to sell them for much wealth to the priests of Ida or of Delphi. So he abode among the Greeks, for there were many of these in Memphis, and he occupied himself in learning the Egyptian language.

Then he bethought himself of Polycrates, the tyrant of Samos, who was yet in close friendship with Amasis, and with whom his father Mnesarchus had much interest. After that time Pharaoh, seeing the marvellous good fortune of Polycrates, advised him to cast away what was dearest to him, lest the gods should be angry; and then the tyrant threw into the sea the ring which Theodorus had made for him, and which he prized above all his possessions; but it was found again in the belly of a fish and was brought back to him by the fisherman. So Amasis broke friendship with him, seeing that he was so highly favoured of the gods, because it was not good, being powerful, to be too closely intimate with one who was devouring the wealth of others and who never failed in an undertaking. But these things had not then happened, and Pythagoras wrote

a letter to the tyrant, setting forth his desires, and speaking of his long studies, and showing that the Greeks might profit by the wisdom of the Egyptians if only Polycrates would persuade Amasis to command the admission of Pythagoras to the school of the Egyptian priesthood. Polycrates therefore wrote a very urgent letter to Pharaoh, which he sent to Pythagoras himself; and Amasis received the young man graciously, and sent him to the priests at Heliopolis, the city of the Sun. But these sent him back to the priests at Memphis, and these latter, not knowing what to do, sent him at last to the great high priest at Thebes, with the royal command. The high priest made it hard for him, and required a long period of purification, and a painful rite and ordeal, hoping perhaps to terrify the scholar. But Pythagoras was of those who are born without fear, and he despised pain, and was initiated.

Two and twenty years he lived in the temple in Thebes, and he mastered by degrees all the sciences, and the writings, and the mystic teaching of the Egyptians, and the religion which was afterwards called his teaching was a complete exposition of all that the Egyptians both knew and believed, and had acquired laboriously in thousands of years. It was the wisdom of those to whom a hundred years were but a day, and to whom ten generations were but as the continuous life of one man, inasmuch as whatever was learned by each was wholly known to the

next, without break nor interval of forgetfulness; and the whole was written down in a hard language that changed not in ten centuries, and was kept secret from the people. It is small wonder that Pythagoras should have spent a quarter of his life in acquiring what the wisest nation in the world had accumulated in more than a hundred generations. There, in the temple of Thebes, he dwelt and studied in peace, while the face of the earth was changed, while Cyrus grew great and greater, till he seemed the greatest of men that had lived, and spread out the empire of Persia and gathered all into his hands, to the very borders of Egypt. Then he died, and Amasis died also, and Cambyses came victoriously to Egypt and dragged Pharaoh's embalmed body from its tomb in Sais to insult it shamefully; and he carried many away captive to Babylon, and Pythagoras the Samian was among the prisoners. Then Cambyses died too, and the pseudo-Smerdis, the Magian, and Atossa, the sister of the first and the wife of both, married Darius, the friend of Zoroaster, and became the mother of Xerxes who invaded Greece.

At the time when Pythagoras was taken to Babylon, he was forty-four years of age, and since he afterward lived to be almost a hundred years old, he had not then reached the middle of life. When he found himself a prisoner, and probably in the social condition of a slave, within the four walls of the greatest capital in

existence, in the heart of Assyria and at least five hundred miles east of the Mediterranean, he can have had little hope of ever returning to the west again. Yet to his philosophic genius such a captivity may not have seemed irksome, and he was not cut off from intercourse with his own people, for a great number of Greeks were employed about the court of the Persian king, and though news travelled slowly, it was brought with much detail, if also with much exaggeration. He resigned himself to his fate, and set to work to study the religious reforms of Zoroaster, whom he undoubtedly knew, and the mathematical methods of the Assyrian and Chaldæan astronomers — of some of those very men, perhaps, whom Belshazzar had called in to interpret the writing on the wall. So he lived and studied in peace, being one of the wise men attached to the court of Darius.

Then he regained his liberty by a most extraordinary train of circumstances. Before Cambyses died of his wound in Ecbatana, Oroetes, the governor of Sardis and satrap of Western Asia, who had long cherished a private quarrel with Polycrates of Samos, enticed him to land in Lydia as his guest, and then crucified him with circumstances of hideous cruelty. But Darius sent a single ambassador who came to the court of Sardis and read to Oroetes the king's commands, and the last command was that the satrap's own guards should smite off his head. And so they

did, for Darius' name was great, and they hated Oroetes. The ambassador took back with him as slaves many of the friends and servants of the dead man, among whom was a very cunning physician of Crotona, who became the friend of Pythagoras in Babylon. One day Darius sprained his foot, and when his own physicians could do nothing for him, some one brought the skilled captive, who cured the king at once. So the king asked him what reward he desired, and he begged that he might return to his home. Darius yielded so far as to permit him to visit Crotona, if he would promise to come back, and not trusting him, he sent with him a Persian guard, and several men of learning, bidding them to write a description of the coast as they sailed, and he gave them a fine ship and many supplies. But it came to pass that as they sailed to Crotona they were driven into Tarentum under stress of weather, and the Tarentines took them all prisoners with their goods, and when the physician had told his story they let him go free and he returned to Crotona. Now there was at Crotona a rich man exiled from Tarentum. And learning what had happened, he sent thither, and ransomed the Persian captives and their ship, and sent them all back to Darius, asking two things; namely, that the King would use his power to make the Tarentines receive him again and also that he would set free the wise man Pythagoras

whom Cambyses had taken captive in Egypt; this he asked at the request of the physician. Then Darius, being glad to receive his Persians safely

AQUEDUCT AT TARANTO, FORMERLY TARENTUM

again, promised both things, and the second, at least, he performed, for Pythagoras was set at liberty; and he came to Samos in time to see his father and his mother alive, and also Hermodamas his first teacher, who

had helped him to escape in the days of Polycrates. But he stayed not long in his home, for he desired to work among men and to turn his learning to their good, and his thoughts went out westward to the great Greek colonies of Italy, so that at last he followed the instinct of his soul and took ship and came to Crotona and founded the Pythagorean brotherhood, which was mystic, philosophical, and aristocratic, after the model of the Egyptian priesthood from which Pythagoras had got his wisdom.

Hallam says somewhere that mankind has generally required some ceremonial follies to keep alive the wholesome spirit of association. It is hard to say now how many of the curious rules of life adopted by the Pythagorean brotherhood should be traced to this motive, and many of these contain more wisdom than appears in them at first sight. The brethren abstained from eating flesh, as most mystics have done, but they were as careful never to eat beans; they believed in the transmigration and immortality of souls, yet they prohibited the use of woollen grave-clothes; they had an elaborate system of degrees and initiations, they possessed most of the existing wisdom of their time, and they nevertheless followed rules for making a fire which seem utterly childish. Yet an inquiry into the origin and reason of some of these practices, if the facts could be sufficiently known, would throw a brilliant light upon the domes-

tic customs of the early Greeks, and might not impossibly explain some of the peculiar superstitions of the south, such as that, for instance, which forbids a man to lay his hat upon a bed, or the universal southern belief that if a woman drinks from a new earthen jar, before a man has drunk from it, the water kept in it will ever afterwards taste of mould. In considering some of the extraordinary beliefs current among the Italians and Sicilians, it has often occurred to me that they may have had their origin in the fables about the Pythagorean brothers, to whom strange powers were imputed, of whom extraordinary tales were told, and some of whose visible practices may have been ignorantly imitated by the people in very early times.

The society founded by Pythagoras was as much a secret one as that of the modern Japanese Buddhists, and lovers of esoteric philosophy will find many points of close resemblance in the two religions, if the doctrine of the Greek philosopher deserves the name of religion, which he would undoubtedly have applied to it, if an equivalent word had existed in the Greek language. It taught that the soul is immortal, that the aim of man should be a virtuous life on earth and a state of peace hereafter, and that goodness, if not the fear of God, is the beginning of wisdom. Yet it limited by the strictest tests the number of those who were admitted to a full know-

ledge of its secrets, and it visited every betrayal with merciless severity; it professed to be a religion for the few, it was necessarily hieratic if not aristocratic, and it was fatally disposed by its exclusiveness to identify itself with a political party. It drew into itself, or its founder gathered round him, the noblest youth of Grecian Italy, at a time when the power of the democracy was increasing at an enormous rate; and in the first real conflict which took place its adherents died devoted deaths at the hands of a bloodthirsty proletariat, as more than one aristocracy has perished since. They had advised, directed, and morally ruled the people, and their general, the heroic Milo, had returned from a victorious war with Sybaris, once all-powerful, but then fast sinking to an inglorious decadence by degrees of æsthetic idleness and unmeasured luxury. They brought home great spoils to Crotona, and in the division, one Kylon, a brutal fellow whom the Pythagoreans had refused to receive on account of his evil life, stirred up a riot against them. In the house of Milo they made their last stand, and there most of them were slain; but a few escaped, and Pythagoras came to his end in Metapontum, and the brotherhoods were done away with forever. Their existence had endured twenty years; had it lasted longer they would have been led from their natural political sphere, by the dangerous paths of political expediency, down to the moral dis-

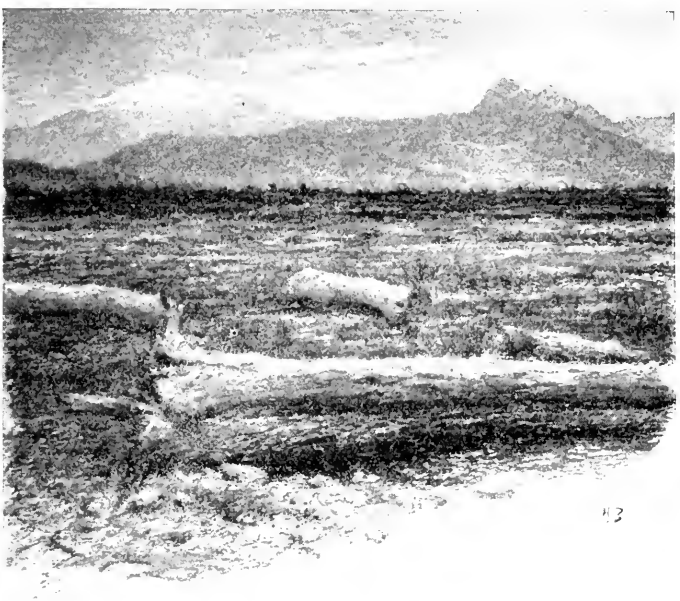
grace of political necessity, which is wholly unreconcilable with any true philosophy, and they would have left behind them the tradition of a once pure faith degraded to the basest uses and expedients of politics. But they died in a whole and clean belief, and from their ashes arose something new, which was not the Pythagorean religion, but the Pythagorean philosophy; their leader left a name little less than saintly, he bequeathed the accumulated wisdom of the world to his surviving followers, and he left his memory to the veneration of mankind.

COLUMNS CALLED THE "TAVOLE PALADINE," AT METAPONTO, FORMERLY METAPONTUM

I have dwelt at great length upon his story because it combines in a wonderful degree the elements of fable, romance, and history, and is therefore a fitting link between myth and truth. I am aware that almost every incident in the tale has been held up to ridicule by

some one scholar, but there is not one in which many others have not firmly believed. When learned authorities disagree, it is the right of the student of romantic history to choose from the confusion of discords those possible combinations which seem most harmonious. It is not his province to dissect the nerve of truth from the dead body of tradition, but rather by touch and thought and sympathy to make the old times live again in imagination. Therefore the godlike figure of this Pythagoras belongs among the Rulers of the South, as with the legends of his miracles, and the reality of his wisdom, with his profound learning, his untiring activity, and his unswerving belief in the soul's life to come, with his love of man and his love of beauty, his faith, his hope, and his almost Christian charity, he represented in its best conditions the highest type of the Aryan or Indo-Germanic people. It matters little that scholars should quarrel over the theories of numbers ascribed to him, that the one should deny his captivity in Babylon and the other his long residence in Egypt, that Bentley should tear the traditions of him to pieces, that Roeth should glorify him almost to sainthood, or that Ritter should make a laudable but ineffectual attempt to find a golden mean of sense between the extremes; the fact remains that he lived and laboured, that he dreamt of a world of brotherhoods in which all good was to be in common, and

from which all evil was to be excluded, that when he was gone he left a philosophy behind him without which, as a beginning, it would be hard to imagine an Aristotle, a Socrates, or a Plato, and that both to his fellow-men and to those that came after him his



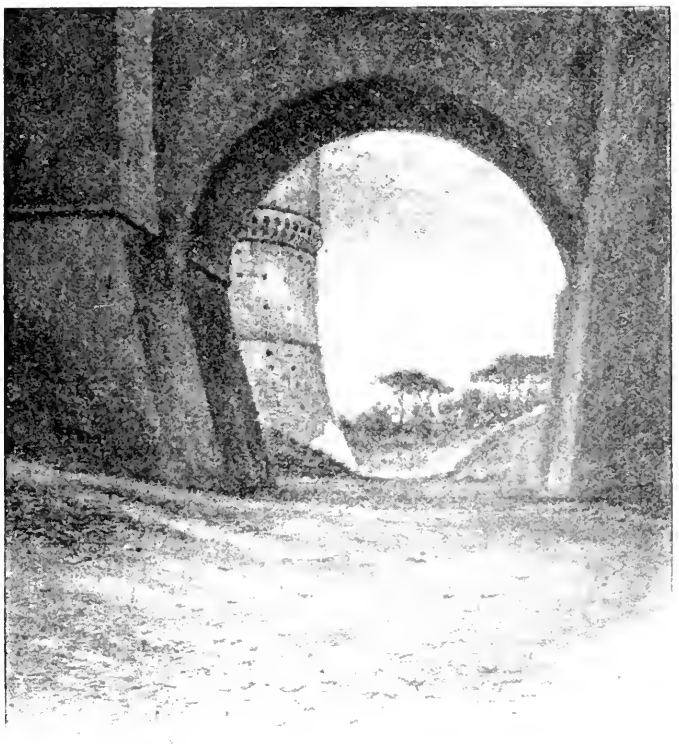
THE SITE OF SYBARIS

name meant all that was best, whether possible or unattainable, in the struggle of inward civilization against outward darkness.

The place where Sybaris stood among gardens of roses and groves of fruit trees is a desolate plain,

where not one hewn stone is to be seen above the storm-ploughed soil, and rotting trunks of trees and rain-bleached branches strew the sterile drift. There the soft Sybarites made it unlawful to rear a crowing cock in the city, or for braziers, smiths, and carpenters to work at their trades, lest any harsh sound should grate upon their delicate hearing; there even the children were clad in purple robes, and their hair was curled and braided with gold; there the idle reared witty dwarfs to jest for them, and bred little Maltese dogs with silky hair; and the five thousand horsemen of their cavalry rode in procession, wearing saffron-coloured robes over their corslets, and the people lived in luxuries beyond imagination, and in pleasures without a name, till Milo and the stern men of Crotona came and destroyed them all, and turned the waters of the river upon their city and swept it utterly away. The winter floods roar down the river bed where Sybaris was, and the spring freshets pile up brushwood and sand upon the barren stones, while overhead the southern hawk makes wide circles above the universal desolation, and his mournful note falls fitfully upon the lonely air. But Crotona flourished long and greatly, and its possessions extended from sea to sea; it has left in history the names of countless winners of the Olympic Games, and the reputation of its men and women for matchless strength and beauty; and though not a stone of its buildings

remains in sight, yet there is a sort of logical satisfaction in knowing that the ancient ruins which were



FORTRESS OF CHARLES THE FIFTH AT COTRONE, FORMERLY CROTONA

standing in the last century were finally destroyed in order that the stones might be used to build the mole of a safe harbour. For Crotona never disappeared

from existence as Sybaris did, and where the ancient stronghold of Milo was reared upon a bold mass of seagirt rock, another fortress, strong in the middle ages, rebuilt by Charles the Fifth and still unruined, reflects its dark outline in the sea.

A deserted corner of Italy now, Crotona is a land of farmers ignorant of all but farming, and it is hard to feel that it was once the heart of Greek strength, and beauty, and civilization in the west, and that where a single column rises in lonely beauty almost from the water's edge, at Capo Colonne, the great philosopher once lingered in the shade of Lacinian Hera's temple; that the picture of Lacedæmonian Helen hung upon the wall within, painted by Zeuxis from the five most lovely maidens of the city, and that the Greeks of all southern Italy came up thither every year in splendid procession, bearing gifts and offerings to the goddess and her shrine.

It is generally said that the influence of Pythagoras and of the brotherhoods, which was dominant on the mainland and left distinct traces of itself there after the catastrophe in which the disciples and their master perished, had little influence upon Sicily. Some say indeed that a tyrant of Centoripa, one Simichus, became an adept and divided all his possessions between his sisters and his subjects, and others assert that the people of Akragas, and Tauromenium, and Himera threw off the yoke of their several tyrannies at last, not as

common revolutionaries, but as true believers in the Pythagorean doctrines of individual freedom and com-

TEMPLE OF HERA, CAPO COLONNE, NEAR COTRONE

mon possessions; but these stories are gravely doubted, and Holm has shown that more than one wise despot was also accounted a Pythagorean. Yet to one who

knows the south well, there is a striking resemblance between the organization of the original brotherhood, with its rigid tests of worthiness, its countless secret signs and pass words and peculiar practices, and its bloody vengeance upon unfaithfulness, and the rules and ordinances of secret societies that have ruled the south in later days. Were there no traces of such freemasonry among the slaves who twice rose against the Romans in Sicily and who seem to have connected themselves in some imaginative way with an Eastern tradition? Or among the people who destroyed Charles of Anjou's Frenchmen in the Sicilian Vespers? Or is the evil Camorra of Naples to-day wholly different from a brotherhood, so far as the laws that bind together its members are concerned, though the object be crime instead of good? Or, to go one step higher, is the modern Mafia of Sicily, which so strangely combines a mistaken idea of patriotism, or at least of independence, with the most nefarious notions of general lawlessness, so wholly different in its forms from the brotherhoods, as not to be perhaps a degenerate descendant of them? Answer the question as one will, the south has always been the natural home of wide-spread and secret unions of determined men for one end; and whereas in recent history political parties have made use of them and have risen to power by their help, no party and no government has ever been able to fight them to an issue nor to stamp them out.

The Greeks were an imaginative and a boastful people, prone to think well of themselves, like most highly gifted races, and it requires much good will to believe all the stories their historians have left us of their superhuman endurance and courage; but it is an undeniable proof of their extraordinary vitality and strength that they withstood victoriously the simultaneous attempts of two great powers to crush them out of existence at a very critical moment in their career. About the year 480 B.C. Xerxes and Carthage, apparently acting in concert, advanced from the east and west with vast armaments and enormous preparations, in the clear intention of annihilating the whole Greek nation in a single campaign. Xerxes came with all Persia and the north of India at his back; Carthage sent Hamilcar and three hundred thousand men.

At that time, except in Syracuse, despots ruled over the principal Greek cities of Sicily, Gela, Callipolis, Naxos, Leontini, and Zancle, the first of which had under Hippocrates acquired a sort of lordship over the rest; and he indeed attempted to conquer Syracuse also, but failed when on the point of success, and left the undertaking to his successor Gelon, the conqueror, and none could be compared with him excepting Theron of Akragas, who became his friend and gave him his daughter to wife; and Theron ruled through the midst of the land, from Akragas on the south to near Himera on the north, but the tyrant of Himera was his enemy

and the friend of Anaxilas of Rhegium on the mainland. So there was war between the north and the south, and the south stood for a Greek Sicily and a Greek civilization, but the north was against both. But in Himera there was a division of parties, and the one asked help of Theron, who came and took the city and held it, while the tyrants of the north turned to the Phœnicians and to Carthage for aid. At that time the Phœnicians were powerful in Panormus and all the eastern parts of the island, so that the Carthaginians were sure of being well received with all their forces and supplies in cities belonging to their own people, whence they could fight their way by land to a general conquest.

They saw that their opportunity was come at last, and they made great preparations during three years, and gathered together mercenaries from many lands, as was their custom in time of war, from Italy and Liguria and from Gaul and Spain and Corsica, and many from Africa, and weapons were made without number, and a vast provision was collected; then they set sail with two hundred galleys and three thousand transports, under Hamilcar, the son of Hanno, one of the two kings called Suffetes, a man of ancient Carthaginian lineage, though his mother was a Syracusan; and he was a devout person who neglected no service of the Phœnician gods, and continually sacrificed men and children to Ashtaroth on the altars of his house. Moreover, he had good surety that some

of the most western Greek cities would help him, such as Selinus and others.

He set sail, therefore, with a good heart and dreaming of great spoil. But immediately a great storm arose, and the ships that bore the cavalry with their horses, and the war chariots also, were filled and sank with all on board; so that when he reached Panormus he had only the mercenary foot soldiers, a great host of fighting men of all nations, wearing strange dresses and armed with many sorts of weapons. In the wide bay of Panormus, the "All-harbour," where the Golden Shell stretches between the high mountain and the water's edge, he landed his men, and repaired his ships; and thence he marched along the narrow foreshore against Himera, where Theron awaited him, not without fear, for great rumours went before the armament.

The fleet sailed along close in shore, keeping the army in sight, and when they came to Himera and saw that the gates were shut against them, Hamilcar made two camps, the one for his land forces and the other for his ships, which he beached high and dry, surrounding them with a high stockade and a broad ditch. But the tents of the soldiers began from the enclosure and followed all the west side of the city and along the low heights to southward. When Theron saw how great a host was come against him, he was afraid, and he walled up the west gate of the

city and sent messengers quickly and secretly to Gelon, the soldier king of Syracuse. But Hamilcar besieged the city, and when the defenders made sallies he drove them back with slaughter, making many of them prisoners; and the strange arms and wild dresses of the Carthaginian mercenaries frightened Theron's men even before they came to close quarters. Nevertheless Hamilcar did not press the siege overmuch, and while he was wasting his days in small engagements, thinking himself sure of taking the city without loss, Gelon was crossing over through the mountains by forced marches, day and night, with fifty thousand men-at-arms and five thousand horsemen, not mercenaries speaking many tongues and trained to many different kinds of warfare as Hamilcar's men were, but all Greeks of the Sicilian cities under Gelon's rule, well trained, speaking one tongue, and ready to die for their homes, their children, and their gods. They all encamped together and intrenched themselves in the plain to eastward of Himera, and Gelon began to harass the Carthaginians with his cavalry, for they had none, having lost both horses and men in the great storm. Then the face of things changed, and the Himerans took heart and opened the west gate again, tearing away the stones they had piled up, and Gelon took many prisoners and bethought him of some plan of striking a decisive blow. Now the Carthaginians had received

promises of help from Selinus, the unfaithful city of the west, and the Selinuntians had agreed to send a body of horse to Hamilcar on a certain day which was also the feast of the Phœnicians; and a captive told this news to Gelon. He therefore waited until the feast day, and very early in the morning, before the sun was risen, he sent a chosen band of his own cavalry to the gate of Hamilcar's camp, bidding them say that they were the Greek horsemen from Selinus whom Hamilcar expected. He, being deceived, bade the gates be opened and the riders went in; but they rode past him and his men without drawing rein till they came to the ships that were beached upon the sand, and they set them on fire before the Carthaginians well understood what they were doing, and then drew their swords and began to slay.

Then, when Gelon saw the column of smoke rising up from the enemy's camp, he knew that his stratagem had succeeded, for he was ready and on the watch; and he marched down with all his fifty thousand men, and with all the Himeran soldiers also, and in that great day the Greeks slew of the Carthaginians outright one hundred and fifty thousand, and wounded many more; and the rest fled as they might, leaving all behind them. Hamilcar also perished, and some say that he died a strange death; for it is told that all day, while the battle ebbed and flowed in a tide of blood, he stood before the great altar in the midst of his camp, sacrific-

ing human offerings to the gods, that by some miracle they might turn and save him from destruction; but when it was towards evening, and he saw that all was lost, he spread out his arms and prayed to the setting sun, and threw himself into the flames upon the altar, the last and noblest burnt-offering of his own sacrifice.

The few who fled intrenched themselves upon a mountain west of Himera, whither Gelon pursued them, and they were soon obliged to abandon their position for lack of water. Hastening to the shore with the Greeks in hot pursuit, they found the few vessels which had escaped the flames, launched them as best they could, and put to sea; yet the unappeased gods pursued them to the end, for the vessels were overladen and were overwhelmed in the stormy waters of the Malta channel. Three thousand and two hundred ships had sailed from the harbour of Carthage with more than three hundred thousand men, to make the conquest of Sicily; a single skiff returned with scarce a dozen survivors to tell the tale.

Then the Carthaginians feared lest Gelon, having felt his strength and their weakness, should cross the water with his victorious Greeks to blot out their city and name, and take the rich coasts of Africa for his spoil, and so complete the circle of Greek possession round the central basin of the Mediterranean Sea. For, as some say, it was on the very day of Hamilcar's destruction that Xerxes was disgracefully beaten at

Salamis; and if that be not so, it was at least soon afterwards; and the allied attempt of Persia and of Carthage to crush out the Greek power had utterly failed. Therefore the Carthaginians sent ambassadors to Gelon, who was now the greatest ruler in Sicily, to sue for peace on such terms as he could be induced to grant. But it is said that Damarete, Gelon's wife, advised him not to set the price of peace too high, lest at some future time he should need Carthaginian help for himself. He therefore exacted only three conditions; namely, that the Phœnicians should desist from offering human sacrifices in Sicily; that they should pay two thousand talents as indemnity for the cost of the war; and that they should build two temples to the memory of the peace; the one in Carthage, and the other at their expense in Syracuse. When the Carthaginians heard of such easy terms, they were overjoyed, and because they attributed their good fortune to Damarete, they presented her with a golden garland of one hundred talents' value, which may have been equal only to about seventy-five ounces of pure gold, if the Sicilian talent is meant, but if the Attic talent was the measure, the worth of the garland would have been near twenty-five thousand pounds sterling.

The power of Gelon grew vastly after these things, which happened about thirty years after Rome had become a republic, and more than two hundred years before Rome's first war with Carthage. He was

the first great ruler, for he brought under his dominion not only all Sicily but also a part of the mainland, and there is every reason to believe that he made Crotona and Rhegium, with all their possessions, tributary to him. In the first years of his lordship, he called a great meeting of the Syracusan people, and of all those to whom he had given the right of citizenship, bidding them come fully armed; but he himself, now that he trusted them, came alone and without armour or weapons, and stood up in their midst, and gave a true account of his actions in the war and afterwards. Then the people cried out and cheered, calling him their saviour, their benefactor, and their king; and so he was, and he changed not till he died, for he was a brave and just man, and a glory to the Hellenic name. He died of a dropsy when he had ruled only seven years, and the Syracusans built him a tomb with nine towers; but long afterwards the Carthaginians destroyed the sepulchre, and at last Agathocles pulled down the towers in envy of Gelon's greatness, so that nothing remains to mark the spot to-day.

It is easy and generally unprofitable to construct imaginary history from the starting-point of an event which might have occurred, but did not. Yet one may ask not unreasonably what would have taken place if Gelon had followed up the victory of Himera by crossing over to Africa and destroying Carthage at once and forever. That he could have done so there is little

doubt. At that time Carthage had few fighting men of her own, but was accustomed to raise mercenaries for her wars, and her whole army, consisting of a third of a million men, had just been utterly destroyed. Gelon had fifty thousand trained Greeks, he controlled vast wealth, and he had the prestige of victory. If he had pushed the war, the issue could hardly have been doubtful; Carthage would have sunk to the level of a province of Sicily, and two hundred years later Rome would not have had to fight the Punic Wars. But Gelon was a victor, a patriot, a wise ruler; he had not the instinct of the conqueror, and Carthage was left to recover from her defeat and to grow strong again within a few years. Yet what Gelon did contributed more directly to the growth of the beautiful civilization which blossomed in the reign of Hiero the First, and bore fruit long afterwards, than a career of foreign conquest could have done.

With the exception of Alexander, whose character was more Asiatic than Hellenic, no Greek appears to have conceived the idea of direct lordship over many states. The ruler of the dominant state controlled the rest, much as the German emperors controlled the Holy Roman Empire, leaving to each country its own ruler and its own laws, but without the tradition upon which the Holy Roman Empire rested, and from which it derived its authority. From the days of Gelon, Syracuse became the chief despotism in Sicily, and led the

rest in civilization as well as in war; but the other tyrants continued to rule, each in his own place, both in the island and on the mainland, with very considerable authority; and Gelon's brother and successor Hiero, who usurped the power from Gelon's young heir, whose guardian he was jointly with another, had to sustain no insignificant struggle with Theron of Akragas, who had been Gelon's friend, and with Anaxilas of Rhegium, before he established his right to stand first among the despots of his day. Then, indeed, he pushed his influence northward on the mainland, and vanquished the Etruscans who had attacked Greek Cumæ, planting colonies in the island of Ischia and elsewhere, some of which afterwards moved away, being terrified by earthquakes and volcanic eruptions, while others remained. So all the south became a harmonious, well-governed confederation of Greek states, a little empire — a great one for those days — under the guidance of Hiero.

But he having attained to greatness, and not being by any means satisfied with the honour and glory achieved by his brother Gelon, nor being by nature of such simple and soldierly tastes, began to make his reign memorable for something higher and more enduring than conquest. Already the greatest ruler, he began to fill his court with the greatest men of the world, and to make Syracuse worthy, in beauty and grandeur, to be his home and theirs.

The Olympic Games held together all Greeks, throughout the civilized world, by a common bond; to be a winner was not only to win fame, sometimes undying — much glory was also shed upon the contestant's native city. Nor were the games only for those trained athletes who ran long races on the measured course, who wrestled desperately in the dust, or fought even to the death for the boxer's prize, or leapt with weights, or strove in mere feats of strength without skill; besides these there were the chariot races, to which all the tyrants of the Greek states sent both chariots and priceless horses, vying with each other in the splendid show; and in these races the prize belonged not to him who drove, but to the owner of the steeds. Countless coins of exquisite design bear witness to the value the princes set upon a successful race, for it is now believed that these coins were only minted for such as had been winners; and as has been pointed out by specialists, there are coins of Messina, Catania, Leontini, Syracuse, Akragas, and many other cities, some even with Phœnician inscriptions from Panormus, all of which have on the reverse the biga, triga, or quadriga, often with a figure of Victory flying in the air above the horses' heads. That racing with chariots was an almost universal sport throughout the Greek states we know, and the fact explains the immense importance attached to the great contests of Olympia, of

Delphi, of the Isthmus of Corinth, and of Nemea. But their greatest value to the world lay in the fact that they gave opportunities of inspiration to the poets of the time, whose odes to the victors earned a greater immortality of their own, and enriched posterity with some of the most beautiful masterpieces of verse that have ever been produced.

The Greeks of Sicily and of the Italian mainland rivalled the rest and often outdid them in the number of winners they sent to Greece, and while Crotona surpassed all other cities in the foot races and in wrestling and boxing, Sicily was more often first with her chariots and horses. That was a sort of contest in which only the richest could compete, and more than once Hiero himself carried off the palm. Then in the train of Olympic victories came the Olympic poets, and Simonides of Ceos, and Bacchylides his nephew, and Pindar himself, all came to Sicily and spent years in Syracuse, being three lyric poets of strangely different genius, but reckoned almost equal in fame while they lived. We know something of the character of each. We can call up from the depth of five and twenty centuries the still living memory of Simonides, who enjoys the singular distinction of having first discovered that poetry is a marketable production of genius, for it is recorded that he was the first poet who not only received remuneration, but exacted payment for his verses, and

he must therefore be looked upon as the direct literary ancestor of the modern author. Worldly, gifted, tactful and extravagant, he used to say that his poetry filled two chests, the one with thanks and the other with gold, but that when in need, he had always found the first empty. Once, when Anaxilas of Rhegium won the mule race at Olympia, — for there were mule races too, — he offered Simonides a sum of money to write an ode to him as victor. The poet thought the price too small and answered that he would not demean his genius by writing of mules. The tyrant determined to have what he wanted, increased his offer to a sum which he knew that the poet would not refuse, but wondered how the latter would extricate himself from the dilemma he had created by his first refusal. Simonides was equal to the occasion. His address to the mules began, 'All hail, ye daughters of wind-swift mares' — and the poem contained no further allusion to the hybrids. At another time he observed that it must be better to be rich than to be wise, since he always saw wise men knocking at rich men's doors. Filled with amazing vitality and love of life, age seemed to take no hold upon him; at eighty he was the winner of a poetic contest and led the Cyclic Chorus in Athens, which means that he not only composed the song and sang it, but danced round the altar with the chorus of fifty youths who sang with him; and this

was in Athens, the very home of satire, where to be ridiculous for an instant was to be ruined forever. He lived to the age of ninety, and we do not hear that his faculties lost their vigour nor his genius its charm.

Bacchylides, his nephew, was of different temper, though he affected to imitate the worldly wisdom of his uncle. Nothing he wrote has come down to us, but at one time Hiero esteemed him above Pindar, and the blot upon his character is his mean jealousy of the latter and his low instinct of flattery. The evil that he did lived after him, but his good verses perished, like those of Simonides.

Last of the three, and unlike both, comes the greatest — 'as the rain-fed river overflows its banks and rushes from the mountains, immeasurable, deep-mouthed Pindar rages and rushes on' — the proud, the stern, the inspired, who 'lived not for the world but for himself,' scorning gold as Simonides loved it and despising flattery and backbiting alike. There must have been something about the man that imposed itself upon others, something not far from awe and much above the most sincere admiration — something that is in the Odes, which alone have come down to us, with a few fragments quoted by Athenæus, something lofty, half divine, almost of the prophet; and all men recognized it and honoured the poet. Yet he would never make his home with Hiero, though he wrote four odes

upon his victories, and in the end, being eighty years of age, he died in Argos, independent to the last, and leaving that rare and unrivalled fame which suggests neither comparison nor similarity with that of other men, the glory of those few who were not only first but last of their kind.

To the court of Syracuse there came not only lyric poets; Æschylus was a favourite with Hiero also, and Epicharmus, the father of comedy, whose rough humour shocks the instinctive reverence we feel even for false gods, when they were grand or beautiful, who in the 'Marriage of Hebe' represented mighty Jove squabbling for the best fish at the feast of the gods, and introduced the divine Muses as glibly chattering fishwives, offering their wares for sale; a man of most irrepressible wit and impertinent humour, even in his ninetieth year.

Æschylus was a younger and a stronger man. He may be called the father of tragedy as Epicharmus was of comedy. Rugged and vast of plan, his work is to that of Sophocles as a rock temple of India to a Gothic cathedral; dimly terrible with the unseen presence of fate, the horror of the final catastrophe overshadows the play from the first and speaks in every accent of predestined man and woman. The watchman sees evil coming from afar, the stamp of it is on Clytemnestra's brow, Cassandra in frenzied prophecy foretells the master's murder, and when it is accomplished, unseen, in

the imagination of the horrified spectator, its effect is a hundred times more terrible than if the king's blood were shed upon the stage. The weapons of Æschylus are huge, and unwieldy to a common hand; but in his strong grasp they have a masterly precision and an appalling directness. Before his time there were playwrights and actors, there were wandering companies of Sicilian mimes who played from town to town, changing the action and the lines of their half-improvised dramas to suit the circumstances in which they found themselves; and there were genuine theatres also in the great cities, where graver plays were performed. But Æschylus first made the stage what it has remained more or less ever since, by introducing machinery and accessories never heard of before, a god appearing through a trap-door — the original 'Deus ex machinâ,' — to put an end to a situation which had no natural conclusion; and rich costumes were also his invention, and sounds produced behind the scenes suggestive of deeds too atrocious to be seen by the audience.

Many tales are told to explain why the tragic poet left Greece. One writer says that he was dissatisfied with the honour he received in his own country; another, that during a great performance of one of his tragedies a platform upon which a number of the audience were seated broke down with its load, and that the poet feared the ridicule of the people; again, it is

said that he left his home in anger, because in a contest of tragedy the young Sophocles obtained the prize against him, but the strangest reason of all is that the Athenians drove him out because their women were driven to frantic fear by the terrible chorus of the Furies, in his tragedy called the Eumenides. Whatever the cause may have been, and it seems useless to seek for a complicated one, he came twice to Sicily, and on the second visit, being nearly seventy years of age, he settled in the city of Gela, near which, as tradition says, he died a very extraordinary death. For it is said that an eagle, having taken a tortoise and meaning to drop it from a great height upon a rock, in order to break it and devour its flesh, looked down and saw the bald head of Æschylus, who was walking in a meadow near the city; and taking it for a polished stone, the eagle dropped the tortoise directly upon it, whereby Æschylus came to his end. The people of Gela buried him with great pomp, and raised a splendid monument to his memory.

Besides his other inventions in connexion with the stage, Æschylus was the inventor of the tragic trilogy, which in its true and original form consisted of three complete tragedies, of which the subjects were closely dependent each upon the other and in each of which the unity of time, of place, and of action were maintained in the strictest manner. It

had not entered the thoughts of Greek playwrights to give any play a greater scope of time than was required for its actual performance, by dividing it into acts, separated by an imaginary lapse of hours, days, or months; to produce such an illusion it seemed necessary to them to write as many different plays as the whole action required different times, and to present them on successive days in order that the spectators might the more easily imagine a longer interval of time to have passed. The modern play in three, four, or five acts is in substance a trilogy, a tetralogy, or a pentalogy on a small scale, and the Greeks would certainly not have admitted a Wagnerian trilogy to be a legitimate piece of play-writing.

During his splendid reign Hiero not only attracted to his court such men as these and many others besides, but he exerted also the great powers which had fallen to his lot in improving and beautifying his capital, and it was largely due to his initiative that Syracuse soon afterwards became one of the most beautiful cities of the world. It was to be the privilege of others, notably of Dionysius the Elder and of Hiero the Second, to bring the work to full perfection, but the first and greatest merit is due to the first Hiero. To the end he was successful in all he undertook, and victorious in every war. When Theron, the friend of Gelon, died at last after reigning sixteen years, his son Thrasydæus succeeded him in the tyranny.

Ambitious as he was cruel, and in all other respects different from his father, he conceived the idea of conquering Syracuse, and raised an army of twenty thousand men, almost all of whom were Greeks. But Hiero was before him, though he had to march his troops over a hundred miles through a difficult country, and Thrasydæus, instead of invading his enemy's dominions, was forced to give battle within his own on the banks of the river Akragas. Hiero's army slew four thousand and put the rest to flight, including the young tyrant himself, who escaped to Megara in the hope of being received in a friendly manner; but the inhabitants feared him, for his name was associated with every sort of barbarity, and when they had taken counsel they put him to death. After that Hiero was supreme while he lived.

He died after reigning eleven years, probably in the city of Ætna, of which it is doubtful whether any trace remains. He had founded it himself, notwithstanding certain authorities which insist that it was only built after his death, and in the latter years of his life he probably preferred it as a residence during the cold weather, for it was situated on the southern slope of the volcano, partly protected from the east winds which, in the winter season, are the only drawback of the climate of Syracuse.

The first great development of art, as well as of literature, in Sicily dates from the victory of Himera

which terminated the first Carthaginian invasion. It was between 480 B.C. and 409 B.C. that the great temples of Selinus, of Segesta, and of Akragas were built, edifices which surpassed in size and solidity almost every building of the sort in the Greek world. The architecture was most magnificent; the art of sculpture, however, was still in its archaic infancy, and the large fragments of uncouthly sculptured metopes preserved in the museum at Palermo must have contrasted strangely, when whole and in their places, with the splendid proportions and finished workmanship of the temples they adorned. These stand, or lie in fragments, throughout the island from end to end, witnesses of an age of faith, of strength, and of warfare; of a primitive warfare that was but wholesale hand to hand strife, of physical strength deified and worshipped as the main requisite for victory, of a material faith which was little better than a glorified generalization of man's animal instincts and of nature's common phenomena. We modern men are more easily surprised by such monuments of material power than by the far more wonderful results which purely spiritual and ethic influences have brought about in more recent days. It seems more extraordinary to us that human hands should ever have piled one upon another the enormous masses of stone that composed the temples of Selinus, than that whole nations should have fought to the

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death for half a dozen more or less vague articles of religious belief.

There is nothing in Europe like the ruins of Selinus. Side by side, not one stone upon another, as they fell at the earthquake shock, the remains of four temples lie in the dust, within the city, and the still more gigantic fragments of three others lie without the ruined walls. At first sight the confusion looks so terrific that the whole seems as if it might have fallen from the sky to the world, from the homes of the gods to destruction on earth — as if Zeus might have hurled a city at mankind, to fall on Sicily in a wild wreck of senseless stone. Blocks that are Cyclopean lie like jackstraws one upon another, sections of columns twenty-eight feet round are tossed together upon the ground like leaves from a basket, and fragments of cornice fifteen feet long lie across them or stand half upright, or lean against the enormous steps. No words can explain to the mind the involuntary shock which the senses feel at the first sight of it all. One touches the stones in wonder, comparing one's small human stature with their mass, and the intellect strains hopelessly to recall their original position; one climbs in and out among them, sometimes mounting, sometimes descending, as one might pick one's way through an enormous quarry, scarcely understanding that the blocks one touches have all been hewn into shape by human hands and that the hills from which men

brought them are but an outline in the distance. But as one reaches the highest fragment within the Acropolis, the plan of the whole begins to stand out from the confusion; the columns have all fallen in ranks, and in the same direction, and from the height one may count the round drums of stone which once composed each erect pillar. There is method in the ruin and a sort of natural order in the destruction. No earthly hands, bent on blotting out the glory of Selinus, could have done such work, neither the crowbar and lever of the Carthaginian, nor the giant-powder of the modern engineer. Nature herself did the deed. In the morning the seven temples of Selinus were standing whole and perfect against the pale and dazzling sky; at noonday the air grew sultry and full of a yellow glare, the sea lay still as liquid lead, and the sleeping beast in the field woke suddenly in terror of something far below, that could be felt rather than heard; an hour and more went by, and then the long, low sound that is like no other came up from the depths of the world, and the broad land heaved like the tidal swell of the ocean, once, twice, and thrice, and was still, and a great cloud of white dust hung where the seven temples had stood. As they fell, so they lie and will lie for all time, a very image of the abomination of desolation.

The sculptured fragments have been almost all removed to the great museum in Palermo; they seem to

have represented battles between goddesses and giants, and, while the treatment is of archaic simplicity, there are, here and there, a few figures in which the rising genius of sculpture foreshadows the great things it was soon to do. On the whole they almost reach the artistic level of the fragments from Ægina, and we may fairly take it for granted that this was the state of art throughout Sicily towards the end of the seventy years which elapsed between the two Carthaginian invasions. Of the same period is the great temple of Athene at Syracuse, crowning the island of Ortygia. Enclosed within high walls, it has been converted to the uses of a cathedral, but the columns of the temple stand intact within, and it is easy to fancy it as it was. High on its seaward side Athene's burnished shield was hung up of old to catch the rays of the noonday sun, a beacon to ships at sea; for mariners who were departing on

FRAGMENT OF THE RUINS OF SELINUS, NOW SELINUNTO

a voyage used to go up thither before they weighed anchor, and when they had made offerings to the goddess they received from the priests little earthen vessels containing flowers and grains of incense; and when the burnished shield was lost to their view as they sailed away, they consigned the little jar and its contents to the sea with a final prayer for their safe return.

In widest contrast to the ruins of Selinus and to the church-temple at Ortygia, is the still almost perfect temple of Segesta. At the western extremity of the island a lonely valley leads from the deep Gulf of Castellamare upwards to the mountains. Climbing the narrow path, the traveller looks in vain for ancient ruin or modern habitation until he pauses for breath upon the shoulder of a hill, and suddenly he sees over against him the faultless outline of one of the most beautiful temples in the world. Dark and symmetrical, it stands alone upon the waste, vividly perfect against the sky that is bright with the reflection from the sea beyond. Of all its forty Doric columns, only one is very slightly injured. Nothing more strangely impressive can be imagined, nothing more solid and more silently grand, more nobly alone. It is as if the visible spirit of the Greeks had chosen that wild solitude for its last abiding-place.

Yet of all the cities of Sicily, Segesta was the least Greek, if, indeed, it can be said to have been Greek at all. There is a sort of romantic uncertainty about its

[illegible] before they weighed [illegible] offerings to the god- [illegible] little earthen ves- [illegible] of incense; and when [illegible] their view as they sailed [illegible] jar and its contents [illegible] their safe return.

[illegible] of Selinus and to the [illegible] ill almost perfect tem- [illegible] strenuity of the island [illegible] Gulf of Castella- [illegible] Climbing the narrow [illegible] ancient ruin or [illegible] breath upon the [illegible] over against [illegible] most beautiful [illegible] trical, it stands [illegible] against the sky [illegible] the sea beyond. [illegible] very slightly [illegible] impressive can be [illegible] silently grand. [illegible] spirit of the [illegible] last abiding-

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origin which was particularly attractive to the Romans, and they admitted the claim of the Segestans to a Trojan descent as noble as that of Æneas himself. It is certain that from very early times Segesta was in closer and more friendly relations with the Phœnicians than any other colony, and it was this circumstance which twice almost caused Segesta to be the ruin of all Greek Sicily: the first time when, finding itself isolated from the other Greek cities and hated by them owing to its former attachment to Phœnician interests, it sent out ambassadors to Athens and provoked the ill-fated Athenian expedition in which Alcibiades played so strange a part; the second, when it appealed to Carthage for help against Selinus and brought on directly another Carthaginian invasion.

But before describing those great events which took place when Sicily's power and influence were at their height, it is necessary to glance at the record of Hiero's successors, since Syracuse had, under him, become the commanding power of the island, and the chief centre of its civilization. Though Hiero was one of the great rulers, and, on the whole, a wise one, it must not be forgotten that he had in reality usurped the sovereignty which Gelon had intended to transmit to his own son, and had held it in spite of the other members of his own family, by the means usually adopted by usurpers. He employed numerous spies, both men and women, to detect his enemies, and he exiled or destroyed the latter

without the slightest hesitation. At his death, he left one brother living, the eldest of all and the least gifted, Thrasybulus by name. He also believed that he was destined to the kingship, and he attempted to withhold it from his nephew as his brother had done; but he had neither the strength of character nor the talent which the latter had possessed, and he oppressed the people beyond endurance. The Syracusans had borne the exactions of Hiero, the victorious, the generous, the adorner of the city, the terror of their foes; they soon lost patience with his mean and miserly successor.

Sicily was ripe for a revolution, and the democratic spirit was abroad; the fall of the tyrant of Akragas had prepared the way, and the despots of the minor cities governed in hourly fear of ruin. Syracuse was mistress of the island, and indirectly of Southern Italy; it was certain that if she freed herself from her master, the rest of the country would follow.

But Thrasybulus was strong in mercenary troops and ships, and the numerous relations and adherents of his family stood by him to a man; a memorable struggle began, of which the result was long doubtful and which showed for the first time the extraordinary strength which the older parts of the city possessed, both by natural position and artificial fortification.

Syracuse overlooks an extensive natural harbour, two miles long and a mile across, free from rocks or shoals, and so completely enclosed by the mainland and

the island of Ortygia that the entrance is but little over a thousand yards wide, opening due east. The island is divided from the mainland by what is nothing more than a narrow canal; it extends from the entrance northward, and north of it Gelon had walled off from the mainland a strip of land about two and a half miles long, of which the sea-line consists of low cliffs that offer no landing worth the name, and no shelter from any wind all the way round by east, from north to south. This strip of land received the name Achradina, a word for which there seems to be no satisfactory derivation, unless it comes from 'achrades,' the wild pear trees, which still abound in this part of Sicily. A modern Sicilian writer suggests that the word might be made to mean the 'height of the cape.' The city of Gelon consisted of Achradina and Ortygia, both strongly fortified. At the time of the revolution against Thrasybulus, the suburb Tyche, 'good Fortune,' was without the walls, on the west, and the larger suburb Neapolis, 'the new city,' extended to the Lysimeleian swamp that opens upon the bay. In later years the whole of the great harbour was surrounded by buildings.

Thrasybulus shut himself up within the walls with about fifteen thousand men who bore arms. The population of the city consisted largely of those persons to whom Gelon had given rights of citizenship, whom he had collected about him, and who had remained there

under Hiero. In the general revolution these made common cause with the genuine Syracusans of old stock, and, with the latter, occupied the suburbs, making fruitless attempts to drive the tyrant from his position. They soon saw that success was impossible, for by means of his ships he kept his communications open by sea and was able to provision the city at his pleasure. The people then turned to the other Sicilian cities for assistance, renouncing their supremacy over the island by doing so. Those to whom they appealed asked nothing better than to help in destroying the power under which they had fretted so long. Gela, Akragas, Selinus, and Himera joined the Syracusans, sending both men and ships. Thrasybulus attacked the ships first, but lost a part of his own, and the remainder were soon blockaded in the harbour; his attempts to sally out by land were equally unsuccessful, the enemy closed in upon him on every side, he was in danger of famine, and he sued for his life, asking only that he might be allowed to leave the country unmolested. The men who had him in their power had been oppressed by him, robbed by him, and it is more than probable that some of them had been tortured by him; but they magnanimously granted his request, he was allowed to depart unmolested, and he ended his days peacefully in Locri. His fall was the signal for a general rising against the tyrants, and in a few months all the south was in the hands of a jubilant democracy.

The Syracusans set up a gigantic statue to Zeus and instituted the Festival and Games of Freedom, during which four hundred and fifty oxen were to be sacrificed every year to make a feast for the people, and for this purpose they built an altar a tenth of a sea mile long and over sixty feet wide — a Gargantuan expression of gratitude to the gods in the present and the future, which suggests that under Thrasybulus they had never enjoyed a feast, and had rarely had enough. But the revolution was not yet over, for the new democracy took measures to exclude from the higher public offices all those burghers who owed their citizenship to Gelon, Hiero, or Thrasybulus, and a long struggle ensued, during which the offended party held Achradina and Ortygia as the last tyrant had done. With the help of the Sicelians, the old burghers triumphed at last, however, got possession of the walled city, and drove out their adversaries.

One of the first results of the fall of the tyrants throughout Sicily was that the Sicelians reasserted themselves on the ground of having helped the burghers to obtain their freedom, and regained a large part of the lands which had been taken from them by the different Greek cities. When Hiero determined to transplant the population of Catania, to change its name to Ætna, and to fill it with more or less Doric citizens, he settled those whom he had expelled upon broad tracts of country taken from the Sicelians. These

possessions now fell back to their original owners. The former inhabitants of Catania besieged it and drove out those who had supplanted them, and the latter established themselves in the new city on the southern

GIRL WASHING NEAR REGGIO, CALABRIA, FORMERLY RHEGIUM

slope of the mountain, which Hiero had called Ætna, while Catania resumed its original name. The same thing took place elsewhere, in all places, in fact, where Hiero had endeavoured to change the population in

order to create one entirely devoted to his interests. As may well be imagined, the result of this second change was a considerable degree of confusion, to remedy which the various Sicilian commonwealths held a general meeting, at which they agreed that the rights of citizenship should nowhere belong to any but the original inhabitants of the towns and that all other persons, whether natives of other cities in the island, or Greek immigrants, or barbarians, should lose their acquired or usurped rights and depart forthwith. It does not appear, however, that they were driven into any cruel exile, and in the great majority of cases they received sufficient grants of land in other districts.

When matters were thus settled in a preliminary manner, a period of peace and extraordinary prosperity began, which lasted nearly sixty years and which offers little of interest to the general reader, but which resulted in a vast development of art, literature, and general culture. Of course, men appeared from time to time whose personal influence rendered them dangerous to democracy. For their own safety the Syracusans introduced the law of petalism, corresponding almost exactly to the ostracism of the Athenians. Instead of the fragments of pottery used by the latter to vote the expulsion of a citizen, the Syracusans used the 'petals,' that is the leaves, of the olive tree, and the citizen for whom the greatest number of these were cast into the urns was obliged to exile himself from the city for five years,

whereas the time of exile imposed by the Athenian ostracism was ten. As usual, however, the common people promptly made use of this method to get rid of every one with more than average intelligence, and the custom was abolished.

An extraordinary and not altogether unromantic attempt on the part of the Sicelians to regain the principal power in the island produced the only wars fought in this period. Ducetius, who suddenly appears as the Sicelian king, succeeded in raising a considerable force with which he dislodged the inhabitants of the newly founded city of Ætna and seized several other important points; but the Syracusans, though not friendly with the sufferers, looked upon their defeat as a slight upon Greeks in general, and gathering their allies, soon drove Ducetius to desperate straits. Seeing himself lost, he conceived the strange idea of throwing himself upon the mercy of his enemies. Under cover of a dark night he rode alone across the intervening country, entered the city at dawn and took sanctuary upon the altar in the market-place; the people assembled in multitudes from all parts of the city, and in the presence of a vast throng the vanquished king declared that he gave up his leadership and all his possessions to the Syracusans. Immediately a great discussion arose. Some were for making an end of him at once, but more generous counsels prevailed, and as in the great revolution the tyrant Thrasybulus had

been allowed to go his way in peace and security, so also now the Syracusans voted that Ducetius should go free, on condition, however, that he would exile himself to Corinth and promise faithfully to remain there during the rest of his life. He swore the required oath and departed, but he found means to elude the obligation ; for it was in the interest of Greece to weaken the Greek power in Sicily if possible, and an opportune oracle, doubtless inspired by Corinthian gold, bade Ducetius return to Sicily and found a peaceful colony upon the shore known as 'the beautiful.' With the full consent of the Corinthians, the Sicelian king, who was in their eyes no better than a barbarian, sailed away with many ships and a great body of armed Greeks, and actually became the founder and father of a flourishing Hellenic colony on the north coast, where he was practically beyond the reach of his former enemies. The strange result of this move was that the people of Akragas regarded it as a stratagem of the Syracusans, gathered an army, attacked the latter, and were badly beaten, while neither party molested Ducetius in his new city. He lived about eight years more and died a natural death. After the defeat of the forces of Akragas, Syracuse became once more the leading power in the island, not without exciting jealousy among the other cities and stirring up the envy of the Athenians by her extraordinary prosperity and magnificence.

The chief fault of the Greeks was a direct result of that gift of individuality, which has never belonged in the same degree to any other nation. They loved freedom as few people have loved it, but at no time in their history were they ever reconciled in any sort of unity or harmony. The wonderful talents displayed by men born in every part of the Greek world produced both a variety and an opposition of initiatives which were easily fostered into violent dissension by the competitive spirit that was so strong in the Hellenic race. All opponents, not Greeks, seemed unworthy to men who had vanquished the Carthaginians in the west, and made a laughing stock of Persia's gigantic attack from the east. If after the battles of Himera and Salamis the whole Greek nation, from Asia Minor to Western Sicily, and from Italian Naples to the shores of Africa, had united to effect the conquest of the known world, Europe, Asia, and Africa would have been theirs, and the Hellenes would have filled the part afterwards played by Rome. But their instinct threw them into competition with each other, rivalry led to strife, and strife to destruction; their patriotism was local pride, their loyalty was incapable of any broad interpretation, and they squandered in petty wars with each other the strength, the courage, and the military genius that should have made them the masters of mankind. If the famous line of Nathaniel Lee, 'When Greeks joined Greeks, then was the tug

of war,' has passed into a proverb, the reason is that the saying is profoundly true. To them it seemed hardly worth while to fight except against each other. The long period of peaceful prosperity, during which the free democracies of Sicily rose to supremacy in culture as well as in wealth, was brought to an end by the jealousy of the Athenians, who seized the opportunity of a quarrel between Syracuse and Leontini to interfere in favour of the latter, which represented the party disaffected under the Syracusan leadership of the island; and this interference had its origin in the long struggle between the Dorian and Ionian Greeks which we call the Peloponnesian War, and which was practically fought to a finish in the harbour of Syracuse. It was the outbreak in Greece of the old enmity between the two great branches of the Hellenic race which revived the same almost forgotten hatred between the Sicilian cities.

At that time, taking free men and slaves together, the population of Sicily seems to have been about three millions and a half, all of whom, both the original Sicelians and Elymians, and the Phœnician colonists and traders, were so far Hellenized that they used the Greek language and practised Greek art, even in cities such as Panormus, which were not at all under Greek political domination. Sicily was already the granary of the Mediterranean, and just then was a commercial rather than a military power,

possessing but few ships and a limited number of trained soldiers. On the whole, Syracuse and the principal Sicilian cities were more closely allied with the Peloponnesian confederation than with the Athenian state, and it was natural that a city like Leontini, hard pressed by the Syracusans, should turn to Athens for help, and that Athens should promptly grant the request, by sending a small expedition of twenty ships. The force was absurdly inadequate, the generalship of the leaders was lamentably insufficient, the result was a miserable defeat before Inessa, and the Athenians barely made good an ignominious retreat. A year later, when they had succeeded in seizing Messina, which was distracted by factions, the Syracusans made interest with the stronger party and in alliance with the men of Italian Locri drove the Athenians out again without difficulty, but lost the day in a sea-fight soon afterwards; and so the small warfare went on from year to year with very little result except to stir up old enmities between the Sicilian cities, some of which feared Syracuse, while some feared the possible domination of Athens; but their own general interests soon got the upper hand, and holding a peace conference in Gela, they were easily persuaded by the Syracusan Hermocrates that it was necessary to face Athens as a common foe. Therefore the Athenians retired altogether and left the island to itself for a time.

The great expedition under Alcibiades was made

against Syracuse, and against Sicily generally, at the instigation and on the representations of Segesta. The latter city was at war with its neighbouring enemy Selinus, and being worsted, began, as most of the states did in those days, to appeal to its powerful friends for help, and first of all to Carthage. The Selinuntians, on their side, asked assistance from Syracuse, which was granted in a small measure. But Carthage would do nothing for Segesta, and the latter, allying itself with Leontini, always oppressed by Syracuse, sent an embassy to Athens, ever ready to interfere, making great promises of payment for the alliance. The Athenians took the precaution of sending representatives by sea to Segesta to find out whether there was any probability of obtaining the promised payment in case the required assistance were given. It was on this occasion that the Athenians became the victims of one of the most extraordinary and amusing frauds in history. Their ambassadors were received with unsurpassed splendour, and the Segestans, who were in reality very poor, succeeded in producing upon their guests the impression that they possessed vast wealth. Leading them up to the ancient temple of Aphrodite on Mount Eryx, above Drepanon, which is Trapani, they showed them what they called their war treasure, an immense collection of sacred vessels of fine workmanship and seemingly of precious metals, but of which a great number were in reality worthless imitations, apparently

made for the occasion. The ambassadors were dazzled by the display and were doubtless told that the treasures were too sacred to be touched or examined. It appears certain that such objects as were really of any value had been borrowed from Sicelian cities that hoped

THE "GRAN SASSO D' ITALIA," FROM AQUILA

to profit by the coming of the Athenians. The ambassadors were then entertained for some time in Segesta with the most profuse hospitality, and the sailors from their ships were feasted by the inhabitants. For these occasions every available dish and vessel of gold or

silver was collected together, and as much plate as possible was borrowed from the Sicelians, all of which was sent secretly from house to house to make a fresh appearance at every feast. On a less magnificent scale the same was done for the entertainment of the soldiers and sailors, who drank the rich wines of Western Sicily from vessels of wrought silver for the first time in their lives, and formed a correspondingly high opinion of their hosts. The whole fraud was perfectly successful, and the ambassadors sailed away to tell the citizens of Athens that Segesta was one of the richest cities in the world and well able to pay for any assistance in war. To confirm the impression they had thus created the Segestans soon afterwards sent ambassadors to Athens bearing sixty talents of silver in bullion, borrowed from their friends, and asking for sixty ships; the silver was offered as payment in advance for the first month's service. What would have happened to Segesta if the Athenians had ever been in a position to enforce their demand for more, when they discovered how they had been imposed upon, may be left to the imagination of the reader; as it turned out, matters took another direction.

At that time Alcibiades was the representative in Athens of all that meant change, movement, and popular excitement. He had long dreamt of a conquest of Sicily, in which he saw magnificent opportunities for satisfying his boundless vanity; he was at that time

thirty-five years of age, the handsomest, the bravest, the wittiest, and the most worthless of mankind. He advocated the Sicilian expedition with irresistible eloquence and claimed the right to command it, in a speech of which the brazen impudence is historical.

"It belongs to me," he said, "above all others, to be in command, and to tell the truth I consider myself worthy thereof. The very things for which I am so noisily attacked are not only an honour to my family and to myself, but also a benefit to my country. If the Greeks admit that Athens is greater than she ever was, this is in a measure due to the display I made as your representative at the Olympic Games, where I entered seven chariots, which no private citizen had ever done before, and won the first prize, and had the second and fourth places, and did everything in a manner suitable to such a victory. And if I give choruses and dances at home, my fellow-citizens of course envy me, but the strangers who come here see the outward appearance of greatness. The unfortunate do not share their misfortunes with others; why should a man who glories in his own prosperity set himself down to the level of common mankind?"

It seems strange that a man should carry his point by talking in such a strain, but of all men living Alcibiades knew his fellow-citizens best, and Nicias, the leader of the conservative party, made no attempt to oppose him on his own ground, but contented himself

with making a fair statement of the possible advantages and evident risks which would attend the expedition, giving at the same time an opinion as to the manner in which it should be conducted. He concluded by modestly offering to withdraw his claim to any command if any one understood the matter better than he. The result was that he and Alcibiades were appointed joint leaders with Lamachus, and preparations were at once made on a very great scale. Meetings succeeded meetings, speeches were made without end, and Athens went mad over the anticipated conquest and possession of one of the richest spots in the world. Nothing else was talked of for many weeks; strolling lecturers held forth upon the subject to delighted crowds at the corners of the streets, and drew imaginary maps of Sicily in the dust. It was clearly demonstrated and proved in the mind of every patriotic Athenian that as soon as Sicily was taken, Athens would take Italy, Carthage, and the western islands of the Mediterranean, and lord it over all the coasts of the sea to the very Pillars of Hercules.

In the final discussion from which I have quoted fragments of Alcibiades's speech, the latter, in order to persuade the people, spoke disparagingly of the Sicilian power and declared the conquest of the island an easy matter. Nicias, who disapproved of the expedition at heart and understood its real difficulty, did not hesitate to say that the force must consist of

at least a hundred triremes, sixty being full war-ships and the rest transports, and five thousand heavy-armed troops, with all the light-armed men and followers which such an armament implied. He perhaps thought it probable that the Athenians would be discouraged from the enterprise by his demands; but if so, he had miscalculated their temper. They granted without hesitation all that he asked, and would have given him more also. For, as Thucydides tells us, the city had recovered from the effects of the plague and from the long war, and a new generation of young men had grown up, and there was abundance of money in the public treasury.

But Alcibiades had many enemies, who hated and envied him. They hit upon an unexpected way of injuring him, and he might have been ruined and even executed before the departure of the expedition, if only they had all agreed. There were in Athens a great many images, called Hermæ, which were heads of different gods set on pillars of stone squared and tapering to the foot. In earlier times the head had always been that of Hermes, whence the name. These were set up in doorways both of private houses and of temples, in honour of the tutelary divinities, and were regarded with a certain degree of reverence. Some enemies of Alcibiades took advantage of a dark night to mutilate almost all these images throughout Athens, hacking the features of

them to pieces, and in the midst of the excitement that followed they accused Alcibiades and his friends of having perpetrated the outrage in a drunken frolic, as a direct and wilful insult to the gods. Athens was in an uproar, the gods had been offended on the eve of the greatest expedition ever sent out, the mutilation of their images was an omen of shipwreck and defeat, and the Athenians trembled for their reputation, their lives, and their money. Great rewards were offered to any one who would give information against the impious evil-doers. In a moment Alcibiades was accused of a hundred crimes of sacrilege, the greatest of which was that of holding mock celebrations of the mysteries, and as for the Hermæ, it was clear that he had broken them, because the great statue of Hermes near his own house was almost the only one that was untouched. Informers also swore that they had seen him and his friends doing the deed and had recognized them by the bright light of the moon, forgetting in broad daylight that the moon was new on that very night. Alcibiades demanded immediate trial, but his enemies feared the army, for he was beloved by the soldiers, and insisted that he should set sail with his command, yet hold himself ready to stand his trial when called upon to do so. He was obliged to submit to this iniquitous decision, and it being now midsummer, the great fleet set sail with solemn pomp and ceremony.

Before they got under way the sixty men-of-war and the forty transports were drawn up in line at the Piræus, with all their flags and their standards in the morning sun; and a trumpet call rang out upon the air, high and clear, calling the host of warriors and seamen to offer the last libation and the final prayer. So the gold and silver goblets were filled with purple wine, and the dark red libations stained the dark blue sea, while the orisons of those who were departing and of all those who were gathered on the shore went up to the gods together. This being done, they weighed anchor at once, the oars began to swing in time, and the great array went forth upon the calm waters; and the ships raced with each other from the Piræus to Ægina and then steered for Corcyra, where the allies were to muster with transports and provisions. Then, with all the allies, there were a hundred and thirty-four triremes besides two fifty-oared Rhodian galleys, with more than seven thousand fighting men, a noble army and fleet if one considers the size of the Athenian state, but an inadequate force for the conquest of a civilized country having three and a half million of inhabitants. Holm, however, whose authority is generally indisputable, reckons that with the crews of the fighting ships and the necessary number of squires for the heavy-armed soldiers, the whole company must have numbered about thirty-six thousand

souls; and before the war was over Athens had sent more than sixty thousand men and two hundred war-ships to Sicily. Not a single vessel ever returned, and few indeed were the wretched stragglers who found their way back to Greece at last.

One of the decisive struggles of the world was at hand, and there was to be no compromise from first

EUCALYPTUS TREES NEAR THE SITE OF SYBARIS

to last; it was to be fought to the end, and the end was to be destruction. The greatest sea-power in existence was determined to get possession of the richest island in the sea, and the greatest Greek power, the power of the south, was united in self-defence. The news of the coming fight went out and rang along the shores of the Mediterranean and was carried inland by traders and merchants, and the

whole civilized ancient world watched the contest with anxiety.

The Athenian command was divided between three men of entirely different natures, — the slow and obstinate Nicias, the boastful and ill-advised Alcibiades, and Lamachus, who was the best soldier of the three but the least influential by his political position. As matters developed, each proposed a different plan, according to his character.

The Athenian fleet, having met the allies at Corcyra, crossed the narrow part of the Adriatic to the Iapygian headland, and bringing to before one city after another endeavoured to induce the inhabitants to join in a general movement against Syracuse. But these efforts were vain, and the cities declared that they would afford no help, but would ultimately act in accordance with the decision of the other Greek cities of Italy. Reaching Rhegium, the Athenians were for the first time treated with some friendliness; for though the city would not admit them within its walls, it gave them permission to encamp on the shore without, and to establish a market whither the country people might bring them provisions for sale; and there the whole Athenian force established itself for a time. In the first place three ships were detached from the fleet and sent to Segesta in order to obtain some part of the great sum of money the latter city had promised. To the dismay and disappointment of the

Athenians, the messengers soon returned bringing word that the Segestans could only raise the absurdly small sum of thirty talents. A discussion then arose between the three generals as to the conduct of the war. Nicias, who had been opposed to it from the beginning, advocated a naval demonstration against Selinus, during which efforts should be made to extract money from Segesta, failing which the city should at least be forced to provide a large quantity of provisions. These being obtained, he advised that the whole expedition should return to Athens.

Lamachus, who was the practical soldier, said that Syracuse was wholly unprepared for resistance, and that it would be an easy matter to fall upon it unexpectedly, gain a brilliant victory, and return home with vast spoil and sufficient honour.

Alcibiades, who was always the evil genius of his country when he did not appear as her deliverer, was bent upon permanent and extensive conquest. With his usual eloquence and with more than accustomed insistence, he addressed the council of war, and proposed that before attacking Syracuse, the Sicilian cities should be systematically canvassed in order to secure an overwhelming body of allies for the great undertaking. He proceeded to exhibit the advantages of this course in the most brilliant and attractive light; his momentary great popularity with the troops gave him an unfair advantage over his colleagues, and the

discussion ended in their reluctantly approving his design.

Had the situation been anything like what he supposed it to be, the plan might have succeeded; but he was in reality altogether ignorant of the state of Sicilian feeling. Many Sicilian cities were indeed envious of Syracuse, and the great body of the original Sicelians resented its supremacy; but none desired to fall under the rapacious rule of Athens, and the vast majority would have considered such subjection as calamitous to their country as a Carthaginian conquest.

The plan of campaign having been decided, a number of ships sailed southward along the Sicilian coast to Naxos and Catania, the only cities which were known to be unchangeably hostile to Syracuse; and Naxos indeed promised the Athenians such assistance as she could give, but in Catania there was a party that favoured the cause of the Syracusans and was strong enough to keep the Athenians out. Thereupon a squadron of ten ships was detached to make a sort of declaration of war in the very harbour of Syracuse, at a time when the appearance of the whole of the Athenian force there might have terminated the war in a week. Instead of this, however, the whole expedition returned to Catania and succeeded in seizing that city by a stratagem which caused the Syracusan party to depart secretly and in haste. But nothing of any importance was accomplished, and the hour of

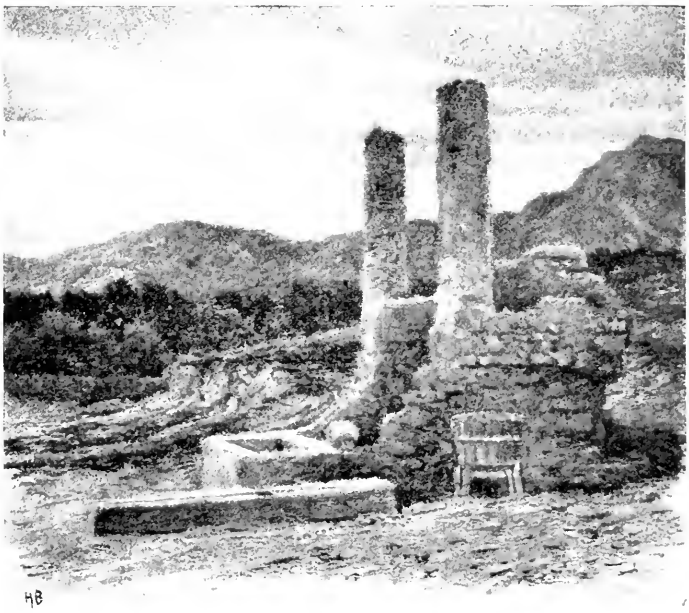
victory was squandered in puerile negotiations with Camarina and other small places.

At this juncture the Athenian senate, having agreed upon a plan for sentencing Alcibiades to death, sent a ship for him with orders to bring him back to stand his trial. Being fully aware of the danger to which he was exposed, he embarked upon his own vessel, under convoy of the Athenian man-of-war, but cleverly slipped away from the latter under cover of the night and escaped to Sparta, after which he was in due course sentenced to death, in contumacy; and therewith he disappears from the history of the south, leaving behind him the evil he had done to the Athenian cause.

Nicias and Lamachus being now left together in command, the counsels of the former prevailed, and the whole fleet began to sail round Sicily by the north, striking a blow here and there, taking a few prisoners who were afterwards sold as slaves to raise money, and receiving at last the thirty talents which Segesta was able to give. They sailed on by the west and south, but a large body of the soldiers appear to have crossed the island by land to Catania. So more time was wasted which was of immense advantage to the Syracusans for making preparations.

Two years had passed since the first arrival of the Segestan ambassadors in Athens when the Athenians at last laid formal siege to Syracuse, nearly one-

half of which time had been shamefully wasted on the one hand by the assailants and had been used with great profit by the assailed on the other. Some reference has already been made in these pages to the



OLD WELL AT COTRONE

position of the city and the nature of the land adjoining it, but a more complete description is now necessary in order to understand the nature of the great struggle which took place there.

Let the name of Syracuse mean for us not only the

city as it is, and the five cities that once composed it, or the two, with their suburbs, of which it consisted at the time of the Athenian invasion, but the whole, with the neighbouring land and including both the great and the small harbours; let it take in what the traveller can see below him and around him when he stands on the rampart of Epipolæ, facing northwards first and then turning by his right till he faces south — one of the most wonderful sites in the whole world, consisting of two small peninsulas of gentle outline and of even height, extending outwards and towards each other like the claws of a crab and enclosing the great harbour between them, with the island of Ortygia across the entrance. The island was the beginning of the city, which was first founded there and afterwards bridged the narrow channel and grew out to Achradina, thence westwards to Tyche and Neapolis, then down through the Lysimeleian swamp and across the Anapus, the swift and silent stream where grows in rich profusion the papyrus, extinct in Egypt now and everywhere but here — and up to the Olympieum, due west of the harbour — spreading at last all round Plemmyrium to the sea again, to face its starting-point across the water; and in its great days the whole was fourteen miles round about. But by great catastrophes and again by small degrees, in the alternating haste or slow delay of ruin, it has all shrunk back to the island, saving only a few newer buildings just on the mainland

below Achradina; and now it may have come to life once more, to overgrow its long-buried destruction with all the profitable dulness of a modern commercial city. For the history of the south is not ended, and he who gazes at the most magnificent natural harbour in the Mediterranean, and then turns his eyes to the most fertile lands of Italy behind him, and upwards to the mountains stored with rich minerals, and who is able to forget his prejudice and see that though the Sicilians are a hot-blooded tribe, prone to use the knife and not averse to bloodshed, they are nevertheless a manly and a hard-handed race, fearing neither danger nor toil — he who judges these things at their value, understands that the future holds some good thing for such a country and for such men. Moreover, guessing at what Syracuse was in the past, he can understand also why the Athenians so much coveted it for themselves that they fought for it on the spot for a whole year, to their utter ruin and destruction.

SYRACUSAN COIN WITH THE HEAD OF ARETHUSA

Of all Sicilian cities, Syracuse was the richest in pure water, and even now, though the old aqueducts are in part destroyed, there is such abundance in this respect as few cities would not envy. Arethusa first, the matchless and mysterious spring, rises almost from the sea under Ortygia, within the harbour. It is certain that the

water passes in some way under the sea, but whence it comes will perhaps be never known. The Greeks said that it was Alpheius, the river of Arcadia, which plunges into a mountain chasm and disappears from sight. The lonely nymph of the Acroceraunian mountains, chased by the strong river god, sent up a piteous prayer to Artemis and sank beneath the stream; and the goddess brought her back to the sun by the Syracusan bay, and Shelley's magic voice has sung her song. Science conjectures that the mysterious water rises in the neighbouring hills, in a spur of Thymbris, and, flowing under Achradina, passes below the small harbour and beneath Ortygia to its rising place. We do not surely know, for it is a mystery still, and a wonder. At this spring Nelson watered his fleet when he anchored in the harbour on his way to fight the battle of the Nile. It is well cared for now, and the Syracusans have planted the lovely papyrus in the central pool. Then besides Arethusa there were three great aqueducts, and a fourth, the greatest of all, which draws its water from the higher part of the river Anapus, eighteen miles away. Southward, too, in the Plemmyrian peninsula, I myself have explored a part of a great subterranean channel which I do not find mentioned in books, cemented for the flow of abundant water and having openings at intervals for the air; but in some later age this was used as a catacomb, and rough cells were hewn here and there in the walls. It is quite cer-

tain that the united waters that supplied the old city in Greek days would fill a river.

It would have been strange if the Syracusans had felt much apprehension, after their enemies had wasted so much time in futile excursions along the coast and in objectless waiting in their camp at Catania. Bands of Syracusan riders traversed the country in all directions, and cantering up to the Athenian lines, inquired sarcastically whether their inactive foes had come to restore the rights of the Leontini or to settle as colonists. At last Nicias decided to act. He began by sending a treacherous message to inform the Syracusans that if they would attack the camp at Catania before sunrise on a certain day, a large number of the Athenians would then be within the city, that the party which favoured Syracuse would shut and hold the gates, and that it would thus be an easy matter to destroy the Athenians who were left in the camp. The Syracusans believed the message and appeared at the appointed time, only to find the camp deserted and the Athenians gone, for they had sailed away on the preceding evening and were entering the harbour of Syracuse at the very time when the Syracusan cavalry reached the empty camp.

At the last minute the city was therefore unprepared for the arrival of the armament. The Greeks had already carefully observed the harbour when their ten ships had entered it to make the declaration of war, and

they now took advantage of the knowledge gained on that occasion to establish themselves in a position which was all but impregnable. Without approaching the inner side of Ortygia, they sailed directly across the harbour, landed to the southward of the mouth of the Anapus, and immediately occupied the heights of the Olympieum. They then proceeded to beach their vessels upon the sand, and according to the custom of those times erected a strong palisade to protect the ship-yard from a land attack. Finally they destroyed the bridge over the Anapus by which the so-called Helorine road crossed from the swamp to the Olympieum. They thus commanded the principal height in the bay, were at liberty to launch or beach their ships as they pleased, and were protected from the city by the narrow but very deep and rapid stream. They could accept or refuse battle as they pleased.

The Syracusans were bitterly disappointed to find that the enemy had left Catania, and fearing the worst they rode furiously back to the city. The Athenians were already encamped and intrenched and the bridge was destroyed. Crossing the stream at a higher point, probably on the road to Floridia, the Syracusans rode round the great spring of Kyane, and skirted the hill of the Olympieum on the west side till they reached the camp. They then endeavoured to lure the Athenians out to fight, but without success, and having failed in this first attempt they withdrew, crossed the road that led to Helorus, and bivouacked for the night.

The battle took place on the following day, and Thucydides describes it with graphic clearness. The Athenians drew up their forces before their camp, taking the centre themselves, with the Argives on the right and the rest of the allies on the left. They divided their forces into two portions, half of which were drawn up in advance, eight deep, while the rest were formed in a hollow square behind them close to the tents. Opposite them, and therefore facing the sea, the Syracusans placed their heavy infantry in a line sixteen deep, having their twelve hundred horse on their right towards the Olympieum, and the road, which they had again crossed, being behind them.

Before the Athenians began the attack, Nicias made a short speech to the soldiers, in which he did not rise above the level of his usual dulness on such occasions. It appears that even at the last moment the Syracusans did not really believe that there was to be a battle, and that some of them even rode away to the city to their homes. Nevertheless, when the time came, they took up their arms and advanced to meet the Athenians. The stone-throwers, slingers, and archers skirmished on each side, driving each other backwards and forwards. Under cover of the heavy infantry the priests in their robes and fillets brought up victims to sacrifice on the field of battle, and at last the trumpets sounded the general charge of the heavy-armed men on each side. So they rushed upon each other, the Syra-

cusans to fight for their lives, their country, and their freedom, the Athenians for the hope of conquest and wholesale robbery.

The forces met with the shock of heavy arms and fought savagely hand to hand, the Athenians with the coolness and steady fence of veteran soldiers, the Syracusans with fitfully furious energy; and when the combat was at its height all along the line the sky grew suddenly dark and a great storm burst upon the field with thunder and lightning and much rain. The experienced Athenians laughed at the tempest, but the Syracusans were suddenly chilled and disheartened; the Argives drove in their left wing, the Athenian centre forced back the other, and in a few moments their lines were broken. Yet the Athenians could not pursue them far, for the Syracusan cavalry, which had not suffered, charged again and again and held them in check. So they returned to their camp, and collecting the richest armour from the slain, set up a trophy after their manner; but the Syracusans, though they had been defeated, retired in good order, and sent a garrison up to the temple of Zeus on the Olympieum to protect the treasure there before they returned to the city. The Athenians, however, made no attack upon the sacred building, and immediately proceeded to burn their dead upon a funeral pile. On the following day, under a truce, they restored to the Syracusans their dead to the number of about two hundred and sixty and collected

the ashes and bones of their own, who numbered not more than fifty; and thereupon they launched their ships again and sailed back to Catania. They spent the rest of the winter there and in Naxos, after ascertaining that Messina was too cold. Nicias seemed incapable of following up an advantage, and moreover it was winter, and the Greeks seemed to have considered it impossible to fight successfully, even in such a climate as that of Sicily, except in the summer months. The consequence was that the Syracusans had ample time to remedy the defects in their organization which had been evident in the first engagement; they elected three competent generals, despatched envoys to Corinth and Sparta, and built a great wall of defence on the mainland between the city and Epipolæ. They also erected palisades along the beach wherever it was easy to land and built forts at Megara on the north, and on the Olympieum.

Meanwhile Alcibiades had established himself in Sparta, and was exciting his old enemies the Lacedæmonians to make a general attack upon Athens, by way of revenging himself for having been unjustly sentenced to death.

"And now," he said, addressing the Lacedæmonians at the conclusion of a long speech, "I entreat that you may not think the worse of me because I am now strenuously attacking my own country on the side of its bitterest enemies, though I once was called a

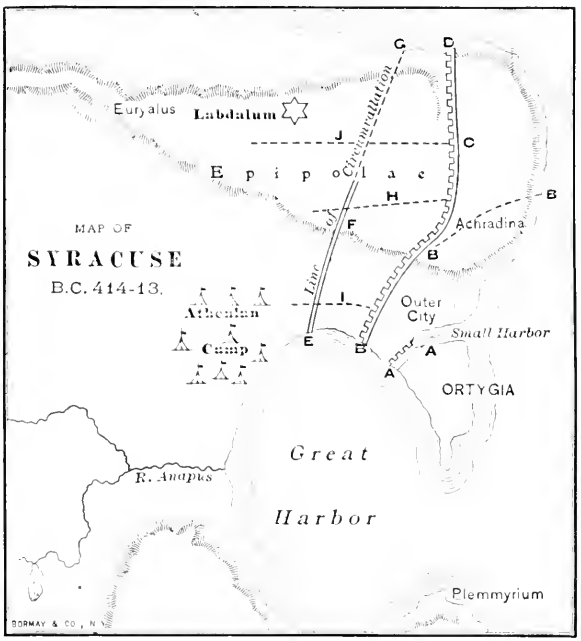
patriot; for though I am an exile from Athens by the villainy of those who banished me, I am not one here, if you will hearken to my words; and the party that was really hostile to me was not you, who only hurt your enemies, but rather they who compelled their friends to become their foes. I was a patriot while I safely enjoyed my civil rights; I am none now, since I am wronged, for I am turning against the land that is still my country, and I am recovering that country which is mine no more."

The speech was well timed, the man's reputation in Greece was enormous, and the advice he gave the Spartans was diabolically wise. He planted a thorn in the side of Athens which weakened her resources and hastened her defeat in Sicily, if it did not directly cause it, and he taught his former fellow-citizens and present enemies to believe that he alone could save them from destruction; and besides following his advice in other respects the Spartans deliberated with Corinth about sending help to the Sicilians. Meanwhile, the Athenians had sent a trireme to Athens, asking for money and for cavalry, without which they felt unable to meet the Syracusans on equal terms; and when the spring was come, the Athenian force did some damage to the Sicilian crops near Syracuse, but gained no signal advantage. Athens sent them money, but only sent two hundred and fifty horsemen, without horses, supposing that they could be mounted in Sicily.

They afterwards got about four hundred more cavalry from Segesta and Naxos, and from the Sicelians.

The Syracusans had in the meantime finished their wall, completely enclosing the city with its suburbs towards Epipolæ, from the harbour to the sea on the north, and taking in the theatre, the ridge above it, and the quarter called Temenites, from a portion of it sacred to Apollo, as well as the extensive inhabited suburb called Tyche, the whole being a gigantic piece of work, but extremely necessary for defence. It must have followed very nearly the modern road by which one drives from the esplanade northwards, and out of which, to the right, the narrower road leads, at right angles, to the Latomia dei Cappuccini. The Syracusans knew that when they were at last besieged the Athenians would attempt a systematic circumvallation, and try to blockade them by land and sea and starve them out; for in those days of small armies, the besiegers rarely ran the risk of losing a number of men in an assault. The Carthaginians alone, who did not fight themselves, but employed mercenaries altogether, sacrificed men with the recklessness familiar in modern warfare. From the great wall they had built, the Syracusans hoped to throw out counter-walls at right angles to westward, so as to hinder the Athenian works. Before the siege was over the Syracusans alone had built seven and a half miles of fortified stone wall, a fact which gives some insight

into ancient methods of attack and defence. But even after building the first great wall, the Syracusans saw that it was more or less commanded by the still



AA. Wall of Ortygia.
BBB. Wall of outer city.
BCD. Wall enclosing all the suburbs.
H. First counter-wall.
I. Second counter-wall.
EF. First section of intrenchments.
FG. Upper section of intrenchments.
J. Third counter-wall.

higher ground of Epipolæ, which means the upper town, and they selected for the defence of that place a band of six hundred chosen heavy-armed men, who

afterwards distinguished themselves in many feats of courage.

The siege now began in earnest. The Athenians did not bring their fleet into Syracuse at first, but anchored in the small but safe natural harbour of Thapsus, just north of the Syracusan promontory, and surprised Epipolæ while the Syracusans were reviewing their troops in the meadow below. After some desperate fighting, in which the leader of the six hundred was killed, the Athenians remained in possession of the high ground, whence they descended after the usual truce for burying the dead, and offered battle before the new wall. But the Syracusans would not face them, and the Athenians then proceeded to fortify the heights, constructing a storehouse there for their baggage and money. They had previously provided themselves with an immense supply of bricks and building tools, which they brought up from Thapsus, and the road they built, some of which is hewn in the rock, is still distinctly traceable. They hastened to begin the tedious work of circumvallation by constructing a circular fort of which the nearest point was about half a mile from the Syracusan wall. Not a trace remains of those works. The fort was intended as a starting-point from which to build a fortification north and south. Such was the extraordinary rapidity with which they worked that the Syracusans hastily determined upon a sally that

ended in a cavalry engagement on the broken ground, in which the Athenians ultimately succeeded in bringing up a detachment of infantry and got the better of the fight.

It was but a small affair, however, and the Athenians had no sooner begun to build their wall northwards from the central point, at the same time collecting stones, lumber, and other material along the projected line, than the Syracusans set to work to build a counter-work due west in order to intersect that of the Athenians. The Athenian fleet being still at Thapsus, the Athenians were obliged to bring up their provisions and materials from that place to Epipolæ by land. The Athenians next succeeded in cutting off at least one of the aqueducts which supplied the city with water. Then, one day, when the Syracusans had completed their first counter-wall and had retired within their tents during the noonday heat, some having even returned to the city, the Athenians suddenly sent a strong picked force at full speed to seize the counter-wall, moving up the rest of their army in two divisions at the same time. The counter-wall appears to have been at first lightly constructed as a sort of stockade with stones heaped up against it, and the Athenian advance guard had no difficulty in taking possession of it and in tearing it down. The Athenians then carried off the material to their own lines and erected a trophy, which they

did on every occasion when they had obtained the smallest advantage. Works and counter-works were now carried on with the greatest energy for some days, and when the Athenians considered that their works were sufficient they ordered their fleet to sail round from Thapsus into the great harbour, whither they themselves descended, crossing the swamp in the firmest part by laying planks upon the mud. And here again a short and bloody engagement was fought near the river Anapus, and the Syracusans succeeded in driving in the picked three hundred of the Athenian van, which produced something like a panic among the heavy-armed troops upon whom they fell back. Lamachus, seeing the danger, came up at full speed with a few archers and a body of Argives, crossed a ditch, and being followed only by a few men, was surrounded and killed, the Syracusans carrying off his body in triumph just as the main Athenian force came up.

Seeing from a distance that the Athenians had lost the bravest and most energetic of their officers, those of the Syracusans who had at first been driven back to the city took heart and came back to charge the Athenians once more, and destroyed a thousand feet of a new outwork built by the enemy upon the heights of Epipolæ. But within the lines Nicias himself lay ill, and he at once ordered his attendants to set fire to all the timber collected at that point so as

to defend himself by a wall of flame, for he had no soldiers with him. So the Syracusans withdrew as the Athenians were bringing up reënforcements. At that moment the fleet from Thapsus entered the great harbour, and the whole Syracusan army immediately retired into the city.

Matters now looked very badly for the besieged. The Athenians continued their works unhindered, and built a double wall down to the harbour not far from the city gate. From all parts of Italy provisions began to arrive in great quantities, and the Sicelians, seeing that the invaders were getting the advantage, offered themselves as allies. The Syracusans had received no answer from Sparta, and supposing themselves deserted by their friends lost hope altogether, for they were completely cut off from the mainland by the circumvallation, and the Athenian fleet had destroyed their communications by sea. They began to discuss terms of capitulation, and to treat with Nicias, who held the sole command after the death of Lamachus. There was confusion within the city, they had lost confidence in their generals and chose others, they were entirely dependent upon Arethusa for their water, which therefore had to be carried nearly three miles to supply the furthest extremity of Achradina, and it was clear that before long there would be a scarcity of provisions.

But at the very moment when despair was settling

upon the Syracusans help was at hand. The Spartans had despatched Gylippus to the aid of the beleaguered city, and he was already off the Italian coast. He was a man of brilliant resources and untiring energy, a most complete contrast in mind and character to the hesitating but obstinate Nicias who was soon to be his opponent. The latter had heard of his expedition and looked upon him with scorn, considering him to be rather a pirate than a general, for he had only about fifteen ships and no great number of soldiers. But he possessed in abundance the military genius which was wholly lacking in Nicias, and nothing else was necessary to turn the fortunes of war.

After experiencing violent storms and being obliged to refit in Tarentum, instead of making directly for Syracuse, by which course he would probably have been obliged to fight the Athenians at sea, he sailed round by the north and picked up considerable auxiliary forces in Himera, Selinus, and Gela. Meanwhile Corinth had sent more ships, and the one which put to sea last of all, but was the fastest sailor, reached Syracuse first, just in time to prevent the Syracusans from capitulating. Gylippus appears to have left his ships either at Himera or at Gela. By forced marches and with less than three thousand men he arrived suddenly under the heights of Epipolæ. The Syracusans meanwhile came out in force and effected a junction with the army of rescue. A better general

than Nicias would have prevented the enemy from obtaining such an advantage, and it proved his ruin. The united forces now seized the heights, and the Athenians formed to give them battle. Gylippus sent forward a herald with a daring message to the Athenians. They might choose, he said, whether they would depart from Sicily within five days or remain where they were and fight to an issue. The Athenians returned no answer and sent the herald back with contempt. Nicias had chosen, and his choice had fallen upon his own destruction. Gylippus boldly seized the Athenian fort on the height and slew the garrison, and on the same day the Syracusans captured one of the Athenian triremes. The Syracusans then set to work upon building an enormous wall, over two miles in length, from the city right across Epipolæ, thus effectually shutting off the Athenians from the sea on the north side.

Nicias now made that mistake which has been considered to be his greatest by military men. He wasted time and labour in fortifying the Plemmyrium, south of the great harbour, and he transferred thither the greater part of his stores, regardless of the scanty water supply in the newly occupied region. By this time also the other Corinthian vessels were known to be rapidly approaching, so that Nicias was obliged to send out twenty armed vessels to cruise in search of his assailants.

Gylippus experienced a slight reverse, for he attacked the Athenians in the narrow space between their works and his, where the Syracusan cavalry had no room to manœuvre and was consequently useless. Once more the Syracusans were driven back with slaughter, and the Athenians erected another trophy. Undaunted by this check, however, Gylippus rallied his men with an energetic speech, continued the works actively, and waited for a more favourable opportunity. It was not long in coming. Gylippus succeeded in giving battle in the broad space where the works connected with both walls ended; the Syracusan cavalry charged the Athenian flank at furious speed, while the heavy infantry engaged the centre. The Athenians were completely routed, and during the night that followed the whole Syracusan force worked at the wall. In the morning it had reached the Athenian works and crossed them, and all hope of completely investing the city was lost.

Fortune now favoured the Syracusans in every way. The Corinthian vessels eluded the flying squadron which Nicias had sent out to cruise for them, and entered the harbour unexpectedly, before the Athenians could get ships under way to oppose them. Reënforced by the arrival of these allies, the Syracusans completed their works, and began to get their own ships ready for sea and to exercise their crews. Gylippus then made a journey through Sicily to raise more

troops and money from the friendly cities, and sent messages to Sparta and Corinth asking for further help, for the Athenians were sending to Athens to make a similar request.

Indeed, the letter written by Nicias and read aloud in Athens by the secretary of state is a confession of powerlessness, if not of defeat, and is, moreover, a singularly honest statement of the situation; for he frankly says therein that from being the besieger he was become the besieged, that his ships were leaky and could neither be beached nor hove down for caulking, in the face of the enemy's fleet; that it was becoming extremely difficult and dangerous to get supplies of food, either from Italy or the island, and that he himself was almost helpless from nephritis.

Both parties, Corinth and Sparta on the one hand, and Athens on the other, responded in the most liberal way to these appeals. The Athenians sent ten ships at once, and sixty later on under Demosthenes, with several thousand men; and Gylippus having raised large reënforcements in Sicily, the armies on both sides began to assume formidable proportions. At this time, Demosthenes not having yet arrived, Gylippus planned an engagement which, though only in part successful, ultimately decided the fortunes of the war. A part of the Syracusan fleet lay in the small harbour outside of Ortygia and north of it; the rest were anchored in the great harbour within a sort of defence made by driving

huge piles into the bottom, leaving about twenty feet projecting above water, with a narrow entrance. The leader determined upon a general battle, by land and sea; the two divisions of the Syracusan fleet were to sail round the opposite sides of Ortygia and effect a junction at the mouth of the harbour, where the Athenian ships would of course meet them, and, as Gylippus hoped, would be caught between them and easily destroyed. Meanwhile, he himself intended to march his army round the bay and storm the forts on Plemmyrium. It was clear that if both movements succeeded, the Athenians would be caught in the harbour like mice, with no possibility of escape.

The operation began under cover of the night, of course, and the engagement opened at daybreak. The Athenians, warned, perhaps, of their danger, succeeded in getting thirty-five ships out of the harbour in time to engage the outer Syracusan division in open water, while, with twenty-five more, the inner squadron of the Syracusans was kept at bay. The outer squadron forced its way through the Athenian ships, instead of driving them in, or sinking them, and was caught, as they should have been. The fighting continued in the harbour, and eleven of the Syracusans vessels were sunk and most of their crews killed. The remainder of the fleet withdrew inside the stockade of piles, badly damaged. The Athenians only lost three vessels. Nevertheless, the result of the day was a victory for

Syracuse. Gylippus had carried out his plan on land without a check. He had seized Plemmyrium, with its three forts, its vast stores of grain and lumber, and the considerable treasure which was deposited there. He razed one of the forts to the ground and placed strong garrisons in the other two. The Syracusans now held every point, all round the bay, from the city to Plemmyrium, the Athenians were driven back to their old camp below the Olympieum, opposite the entrance of the harbour, and, being completely hemmed in by land, were obliged to fight their way in and out of the harbour in order to maintain communications and receive supplies. Their destruction was now clearly a question of time.

They exerted every energy to prevent the safe arrival of the Corinthian reënforcements, and made desperate attempts to destroy the ships anchored within the stockade. To this end they moved up to it one of their largest ships, a vessel of ten thousand talents' burden, equal to about two hundred and fifty tons by our measurement, fitted with cranes and windlasses that were protected by armoured screens; and making fast ropes to the piles as far below water as possible, they hove them out and towed them away. There were divers among the Athenians who, for a reward, went down with saws and sawed some of the piles off at such a depth that the stumps could not injure the vessels; and the Syracusans had also purposely driven

in stakes in certain places, below the surface, that the Athenian ships might run upon them, but these also the divers succeeded in sawing away. Now no man can work at sawing below water for more than thirty or forty seconds at a time without coming up for breath, so that the divers must have worked many hours, and perhaps a whole day, at cutting through a single pile. The Syracusans, however, were not slow to replace those which the Athenians removed or destroyed, and the latter gained no advantage in that way, while the difficulty of obtaining provisions increased daily, and the malarious fever caused by the Lysimeleian swamp in the summer months made ravages in the Athenian camp.

At this juncture the fleet commanded by Demosthenes appeared off Syracuse in magnificent array. Seventy-three galleys sailed down in even order, their signals streaming on the wind, their richly adorned and painted bows rising high above the blue water. From the decks gleamed the shields and helmets of five thousand heavy-armed men, and as they neared Ortygia, soldiers and seamen raised the song of war and the loud Grecian trumpets blared out triumphant notes.

Demosthenes intended to terrify the Syracusans by making all the display of military and naval power of which he could dispose, and the Syracusans almost lost heart again at the approach of a new host of enemies. As soon as Demosthenes had landed he proposed to

Nicias to make a general attack by sea and land, and if his advice had been taken, a signal success might have been gained. But Nicias had grown timid and was broken down by illness, and Plutarch even says

STREET OF ANCIENT TOMBS, SYRACUSE

that he had an understanding with certain traitors in Syracuse, who advised him to wait patiently, as the inhabitants were weary of the war and of the exacting energy of Gylippus, and would soon begin to

dispute among themselves. But Demosthenes inspired the Athenians with courage and at last succeeded in carrying his point. He determined to make a night attack upon Epipolæ, and taking the guards by surprise he slew a great number and was hastening on, supposing that he had carried the position, when he suddenly came upon the Bœotian detachment, which was already under arms. Uttering their tremendous war-cry, they closed up with levelled spears and charged the Athenians with the force of a solid mass. The young moon was hastening to her setting, and shed an uncertain light. The wildest confusion fell upon the Athenians as they fled in disorder, or attacked each other, unable to distinguish their friends from their foes. The faint moonlight, reflected upon the gleaming shields of the Syracusans and upon their glittering arms, made them appear ten times more numerous, and as the victorious force preserved its compact order, shoulder to shoulder, every soldier knew that he had only foes before him and friends behind, every thrust went home and every blade was dyed in Athenian blood. Many, in their flight, fell from the low cliffs and were killed, a few lost themselves in the fields beyond Epipolæ while attempting to escape, and as the dawn lightened, the Syracusan horse scoured the country and cut down every straggler. Between midnight and morning two thousand Athenians had perished.

Nicias had expected nothing better, but yet he would not hear of a general retreat, and Demosthenes, having failed in his first enterprise, attempted no further action for some time. At last, as fresh reënforcements strengthened the Syracusan army, Nicias reluctantly consented to withdraw and gave the order to embark the troops. But on that very night, the moon, being full, was totally eclipsed, and not only Nicias himself, but all the Greeks with him, were paralyzed with fear by what they considered a terrific portent. After consulting a diviner, Nicias declared that the army could not embark until the moon had completed another revolution. He was approaching his destruction, and even nature seemed to conspire with ill fortune to ruin him. In total inactivity he passed his time in sacrificing to the gods, while his diviner consulted the auguries presented by the victims. His ships lay idly at anchor, their seams opening under the blazing sun; his disheartened soldiers made no attempt to prevent the Syracusans from hemming them in; hundreds died of the malarial sickness spread by the pestilential swamp. The Syracusan fishermen and boatmen pulled out to the men-of-war and jeered at them, offering them fight. A boy, Heraclides, the son of a great Syracusan house, ventured in a skiff close under an Athenian vessel that was unmoored, and reviled the captain amid the laughter of the other boys. Furious at being insulted by a child, the officer manned the

oars and gave chase. Instantly ten Sicilian galleys, now always ready for fight, put out to save the lad, others followed, and a sharp engagement ensued in which the Syracusans did considerable damage to the Athenian vessels and slew a general and a number of men.

The Syracusans lost no time in completely blocking the entrance of the harbour, after this success, and Nicias was reluctantly driven to fight where starvation and death by fever were the only alternatives. He embarked the best of his heavy infantry, and chosen detachments of archers and spearmen, manning a hundred and ten vessels, and he marshalled the rest of his army on the shore to await the event.

It was the end. The swift Syracusan ships pulled out in wide order, provided with their catapults, and with vast numbers of stones which could be discharged with terrible effect at short range, and against which the Athenians had no missiles but darts and arrows. The Athenian fleet was so crowded together that the ships could barely advance, and were unable to execute any manœuvre; the Syracusans, on the contrary, could charge, turn, and retire as they pleased; from the shore and from the city a hundred thousand spectators watched the struggle for life or death. Driven together upon each other, rammed and battered by their assailants, the Athenian ships sank one by one with the living and the dead together, and

as the sun declined to the west what had been a battle became but a universal massacre; at evening the Athenian fleet was totally destroyed, and no alternative remained for the survivors ashore but to cut their way through the Syracusan lines in a hopeless attempt to escape by land. Gylippus would have fallen upon them in their camp without delay, but the Syracusans, in wild rejoicing at their great victory, could not be induced to postpone a universal feast. Hermocrates, however, whose counsels and ready wit had helped his countrymen throughout the war, sent a treacherous message to Nicias, warning him that every pass was held and every point of the works completely manned, and he was deceived and waited for the morning. Then indeed the Syracusans, having feasted and rested, went out and held the whole line during all that day and the following night. At last the Athenians, still forty thousand strong, began to move, going up from their camp with tears and loud lamentations, and leaving their sick and wounded behind them. They broke a passage through the lines indeed, but the whole Syracusan force was upon them, flanking them continually, following them, and slaying them like sheep as they struggled hopelessly and almost without food through the valley towards Floridia. Eight days the massacre lasted, until there was no hope, and the remnant of the greatest army of that age surrendered uncondi-

tionally to Spartan Gylippus. Some say that Demosthenes and Nicias killed themselves, and this is more likely, but others say that the Syracusans stoned them to death. Then the Syracusans dressed those tall trees that still grow by the river for miles, with the arms of their fallen foes, making blood-stained trophies all the way; and they plucked leaves and autumn flowers and made themselves garlands for their helmets and adorned their horses too; and thus marched back in a glorious triumph, driving their prisoners before them; for the war was over, and of all the vast armament that had come against Syracuse not one vessel was ever to return to Greece, and not one man had escaped to bear arms or to lift a hand against the victorious city, but all were dead or slaves. There was not even one to bring the frightful news to Athens, and it was late in the autumn when a travelling merchant carelessly told the story to a barber in the Piræus, supposing that all Greece knew it. Thus ended the great Athenian expedition, and thus was Alcibiades revenged.

Forty thousand men had left the Athenian camp to begin the retreat. After the battle about seven thousand prisoners remained alive. They suffered a hideous condemnation; let any one who wishes to understand their fortunes go down into the great quarries of Syracuse and see for himself; for, saving that the quarries are larger now than they were then and full of trees

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and flowers, they are the same in their shape and in their appalling isolation. They are still called the Latomie, the 'places of stone cutting,' and the tale of what once happened in them is told still, handed down perhaps without a break, through the changing generations of many races of inhabitants, Greeks, Romans, Saracens, Normans, Spaniards, and Italians. They are situated on an irregular line which leads eastward from the one nearest to the theatre, across Achradina to the last and most extensive of all, called the Latomia dei Cappuccini, which is very near the sea. In all that region the soil is thin but very rich, and below it the yellowish white stone lies in a solid mass, perhaps hundreds of feet deep. Straight down from the surface the stone has been quarried to a depth of from eighty to a hundred feet, making sheer walls of rock on every side, so that the only means of descent is by wooden ladders, and neither man nor beast can scale the height without help from above. Below, it is all an enchanted garden now; two thousand and three hundred years ago it was a bare quarry of white stone, strewed with stone chips and stone dust. By day the sun beat down into it, with the glare of the unpitying sky, and was reflected from its sides, and the rock radiated an intolerable heat; at evening the upper air, suddenly chilled at sunset, rushed down and filled it with an icy dampness. A furnace in summer, bitterly cold in winter, a fever hole in the autumn rains, a hell at all times save in spring,

the Syracusans found it ready to their hand to be a place of torture and death for their beaten enemies. Therefore they let them down into it by the cranes that

PATH UNDER ROCKS, LATOMIA DEI CAPPUCCINI, SYRACUSE

served to lift the stone, being seven thousand men in all; and lest it should be said that they had starved prisoners to death, they sent down to them rations, for every man half a pint of water every day, or very little

more, and twice as much of raw barley or other grain; and this was only half the measure of food that was given to common slaves in those days, and the slaves had water in abundance.

Now among the miserable captives there were many who had been wounded in the last fight and had been taken alive, and these suffered less, for they died first, of their injuries and of fever. But the strong and the well lived on in torment, and the bodies of the dead lay in the quarry among the living, and the poison of death made the air horrible to breathe, so that mortal sickness fell upon the strongest, and they died daily, while each dead man became a new source of pestilence. Ten weeks long they died, and yet they were not all dead; and when the sun was declining, and the people of Syracuse went out to taste the sea breeze, many came and stood at the edge of the quarry, on the windward side, lest their nostrils should be offended, and looked down at men who were rotting alive, all that remained of the great Athenian army, men who were not men, but half-clad skeletons, scarce moving or breathing between the heaps of shapeless corpses that had been their friends. And the fine ladies of Syracuse held little vials of scent to their noses and leaned upon their slaves' arms, and looked down curiously; for the Athenians had been handsome men.

When seventy days had gone by, the Syracusans took out those of the living who were not Athenians,

and sold them for slaves, many being not worth a day's purchase; but they left the Athenians to suffer a little longer, and when at last they brought them up, they heated branding-irons red hot, and branded them all in the forehead with the mark of the Syracusan horse, and sold them as slaves for the public benefit. Yet amid so much shadow of cruelty there is one redeeming light. The Syracusans loved the verses of the tragic poet Euripides above all other poetry, and in the great theatre, carved with its high ranks of seats from the solid rock in the hollow side of the mountain, they had been used to sit enthralled and listen to the 'Medea' and the 'Alcestis' and the other great plays, through long summer afternoons, when the sun was behind them, and behind the mountains. Among the Athenian captives there were many who could repeat and sing long passages from Euripides' plays; and these men were favoured far above the others when they were sold as slaves, so that some of them were even freed for the poet's sake, and long afterwards went back and found him and thanked him, branded though they were, for life and liberty. Nothing we know of to tell, and no story that a man might build up with the material of imagination, could show as this does the difference between that age and ours. There was divinity in the poet then, and his inspiration was from a god, deserving to be worshipped and revered as a heavenly gift; and those who had skill to sing his words, as he would

have them sung, were sharers in his genius and blessed with a talent half divine, which others recognized and loved.

There is a sort of taste in nations which belongs to their young days, when they have not done their best, a living and creative taste that is closely akin to hope

OLD WELL IN THE LATOMIA DEI CAPPUCCINI, SYRACUSE

and aspiration; and there is another sort that comes with decadence and is satisfied more with the past than with the present or the future, that knows neither the elation of hope nor the satisfaction that lies in creation, but which is easily cast down, sad, self-tormenting, and as often a source of pain as of pleasure. So the degenerate Sybarite writhed upon a ruffled rose leaf

and ached at the sight of a man digging hard ground, and the modern exquisite utters poor little cries of distress at the sound of a false note or the glare of a false colour.

In those days Sicily was in the stronger, brighter, earlier stage of life, and it would have asserted itself in a vast artistic productiveness after the failure of the Athenian invasion, if that event had been followed by a period of peace. The first impulse of the Syracusans and of the other free Greek cities of Sicily was to build temples and to raise up statues to the gods, in gratitude for the greatest victory ever won by Greeks over Greeks; and as peace followed war, and plenty grew up where famine had followed the destruction of crops, the hearts of the people were lightened and the song of rejoicing filled the land. While the law-givers they chose at home were occupied in framing a code that would not disgrace a modern civilization, Sicilian fleets and Sicilian soldiers sailed eastward to the islands and even to the shores of Asia Minor, paying back war with war, allied with the Peloponnesians for the final destruction of Athens, the common enemy, and bringing home shiploads of treasure and booty. Could this condition of things have lasted, there is no telling to what heights the prosperity of Sicily might have risen in a few years. But the old causes were at work to produce new disasters; the Athenians had invaded the island ostensibly to right the wrongs inflicted upon

Segesta by Selinus and on Leontini by Syracuse; in the terrific struggle with Syracuse, Selinus had been more than half forgotten, and one year's crop had not been sown and reaped before those very circumstances renewed themselves which had led to the destruction of a great fleet and of sixty thousand men. The Selinuntians fancied that since Athens had fallen they could harass their old enemies at their pleasure, and boldly crossing the border they made havoc of the Segestan country. Now the land subject to Segesta lay in a broad tract between the Phœnician colonies of Panormus and of Lilybæum, and a free and safe passage across was essential to the commerce of both, the distance by sea being far greater and the voyage not always free from danger. It was therefore to the interest of Carthage that Segesta, which had always been friendly to her, should not be overrun by the Selinuntians who had always been her enemies, and when Segesta appealed to her for help as it had appealed to Athens some six years earlier, a ready assistance was granted on interested grounds. The despatching of a few thousand men to help the oppressed state had the natural result of sending Selinus to Syracuse for assistance in its turn, and Syracuse promised it readily, not dreaming of the magnitude of the undertaking. Carthage, mindful of the ignominious defeat suffered at the hands of the Syracusans in Himera seventy years earlier, and dreading lest, since Athens was fallen, Syracuse should

obtain the empire of the Mediterranean, put forth all her strength and began to raise an enormous army.

In the spring of the year 409 B.C. sixty Carthaginian men-of-war convoyed no less than fifteen hundred small vessels from Carthage to Lilybæum, carrying an army of something like two hundred thousand foot-soldiers and four thousand cavalry, together with an immense supply of war material and siege engines. At the head of this formidable force was the grandson of Hamilcar, who had perished in his own sacrifice at Himera. This was Hannibal, the second of the name who appears in history, and who is said to have sworn a solemn oath to avenge his grandsire. Landing on the headland of Lilybæum, he at once began to lay waste the country, and moving rapidly forwards, attacked Selinus itself with all the energy which Nicias had lacked. He fell upon the city from the north; six iron-headed battering rams were brought to make a breach in the walls, six lofty towers, which overtopped the fortifications, slung masses of stone into the city, while slingers and archers picked off the defenders one by one. Nevertheless, the people defended themselves courageously, trusting to the speedy arrival of help from Syracuse. The young men fought, the old provided them with fresh weapons and missiles, and the women brought food and drink to the combatants. But Hannibal promised the soldiers the whole plunder of the city, and the siege was prose-

cuted with surprising energy. The men fought in watches and by turns, marching up to relieve each other with trumpet call and war-cry. Day and night the battering rams, hanging in their frames by iron chains, pounded the walls with the sound of unceasing thunder. A breach was broken, and Hannibal's Campanian mercenaries charged in; but as their need grew greater the defenders fought more desperately, and the first attack was repulsed with frightful slaughter. Messengers rode for life and death to Akragas and Gela and Syracuse, bearing the news of their city's supreme need. But it was too late. The battering rams still pounded at the wall, and still the catapults hurled huge stones from the towers; the breach was widened and held by the enemy, while still the defenders fought like madmen and looked eastward for help through nine long days. Driven back from the breach at last, as a great cry of woe went up from their women, they defended themselves to the end. They threw up barricades of stones, fighting from street to street; the old men, the wounded, the women and the children, climbed to the roofs and dashed down stones and tiles upon the Carthaginians. But at last it was over and the city was won. Then fire and the sword did the rest, for Hannibal knew his men and kept his word and gave them their hearts' desire. Slaying every living thing they met, they broke into every house, flung the booty

into the streets, and set each dwelling on fire before they left the door. The soldiers paraded the streets, bearing on their spears the heads of the vanquished, and hideous festoons of hands cut off and strung together. Only those women and children were spared who had taken refuge in the temples, and not from any reverence for the gods, but in fear lest they should fire the temples in self-defence and destroy the rich treasures preserved there. On that day sixteen thousand lives fell to the Carthaginian swords; less than three thousand persons escaped alive to Akragas, and, weary of slaughter, the victors carried off five thousand prisoners.

Then at last the first three thousand of the Syracusan troops appeared and sent heralds demanding that Hannibal should at least respect the temples and give up their prisoners for a ransom; but Hannibal answered roughly that since the Selinuntians had not been able to defend their freedom they must learn to be slaves, and so far as the temples were concerned the gods appeared to have abandoned both them and their city. From this destruction Selinus never recovered.

Hannibal crossed unhindered to Himera next, and proceeded at once to a formal siege, undermining the walls and soon producing a wide breach. A Syracusan fleet of five and thirty sail came in sight, and the hopes of the city rose to enthusiasm; but by

treacherous messages Hannibal made the admiral of the fleet believe that he was about to raise the siege because the whole Syracusan army was advancing by land, and that Syracuse being therefore undefended he intended to attack it without delay. The admiral made ready to go to the rescue, and seeing themselves about to be deserted, a great part of the population abandoned the city to the enemy, crowding the ships until there was no more room, and the remainder marching out by land. On the following day the Carthaginians entered Himera; the women and children were carried out to the camp to be sold as slaves in Africa, and on the spot where his grandsire had perished, Hannibal appeased his unquiet spirit by the mutilation and slaughter of three thousand Himeran warriors. Last of all he burned the whole city and razed the ruins to the ground.

Here in the story appears for the last time Hermocrates, in a short and brilliant campaign that ended in his violent death at the gates of Syracuse. From the beginning of the Athenian invasion his counsels had helped Syracuse, his labours had been unceasing, his submission to the generalship of Gylippus exemplary; he had seemed a man above passion, inspired only by the purest love of his country. But his country feared the return of a tyranny like that of Thrasybulus, and accusing him of plotting to get the despotism, Syracuse exiled her best and bravest. In exile he had not

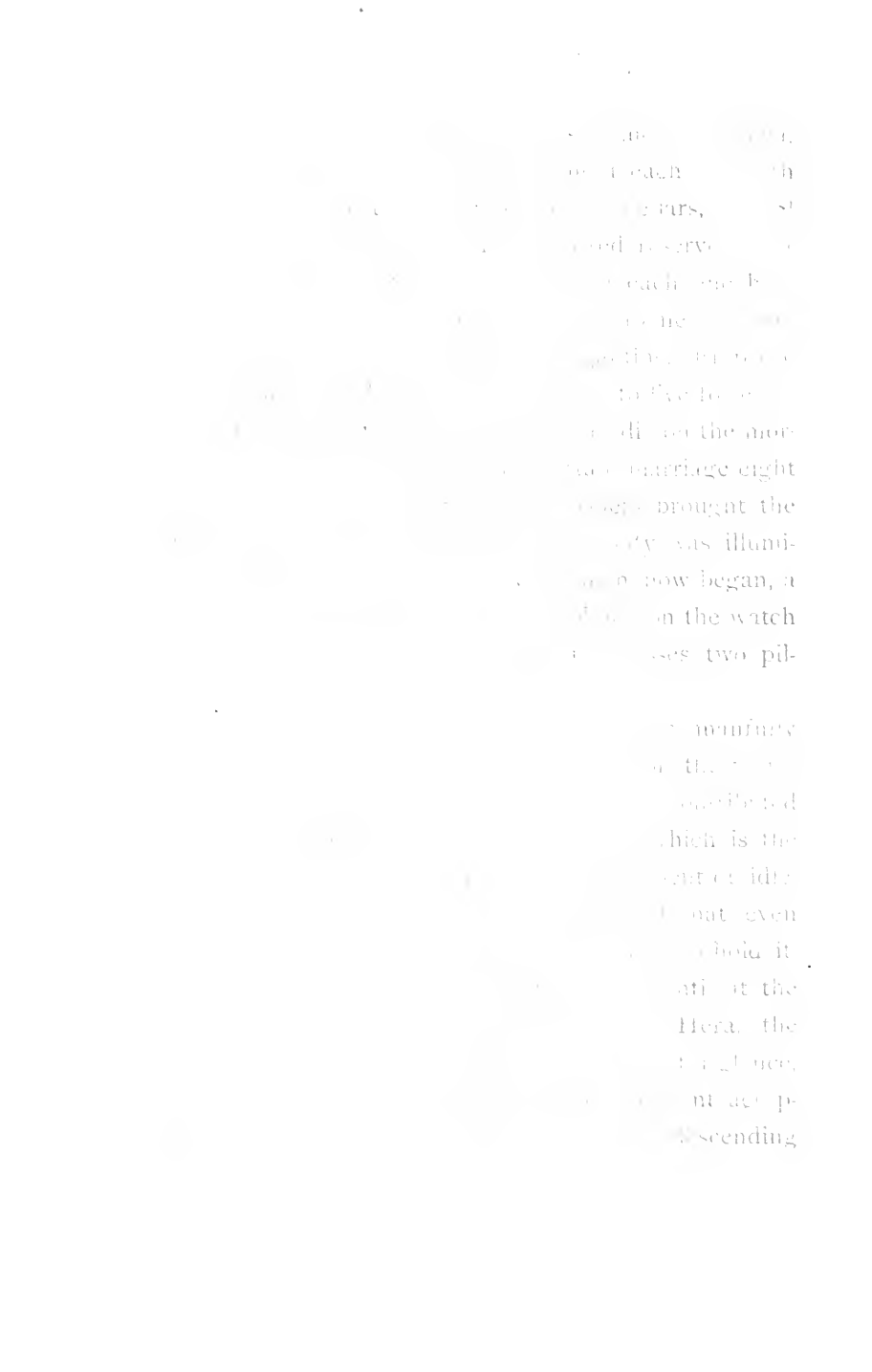
turned against the state, as Alcibiades had turned against Athens; he remained faithful and devoted, waiting and longing for an opportunity to return. He saw his chance when the Carthaginians withdrew after the final slaughter at Himera. Provided with large sums of money, he came to Messina, built five warships of his own and raised a thousand men. He collected the fugitives from Himera, sailed round to Selinus, and rapidly fortified the ruins left by the Carthaginians. Without losing time, but gathering an army of six thousand men, he dashed across the island, surprised Motye and Panormus, and laid waste the country. Even then Syracuse would not recall him from banishment. He marched down to Himera and collected from the field of battle the unburied bones of the Syracusans who had perished there, and sent them reverently to Syracuse; but yet his native city would not receive him back. Mad with longing to see his home, and believing that if he appeared in person, the false accusations against him would be forgotten, he rode with a few followers to the very gate of the city. His friends received him, but could not save his life, for his enemies spread the report that he had returned with an army, and they fell upon him and cruelly slew him on the threshold of his home. But some of his followers saved themselves, and though they were all banished, there was one among them who, being desperately wounded, was given out to be dead, and he escaped

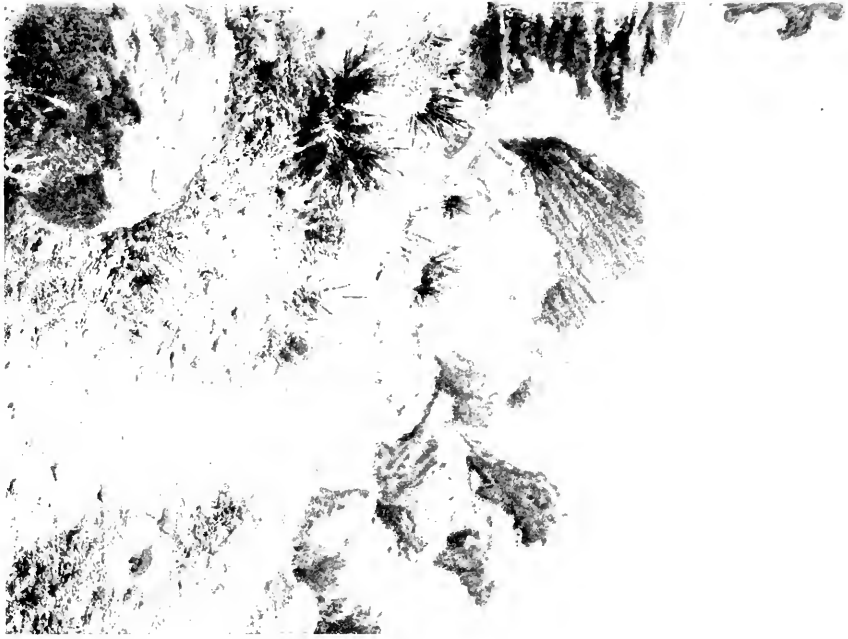
the ban; he was Dionysius, who was to save Syracuse from the Carthaginians, and was to be her lord and despot before many years should pass.

For soon the Carthaginians bethought themselves how they should avenge the raid made by Hermocrates upon the Phœnician west, and they fortified beforehand a strong place on the coast, which is now Termini, near Himera, and equipped another great army, under Hannibal the victorious; and they brought over between two and three hundred thousand fighting men, to attack Akragas, rich in corn and wine and oil, as Girgenti is to-day. For the Akragantines were a peace-loving people who kept out of war and enriched themselves with agriculture and trade; and their city was beautiful with many temples, and with many monuments, some of which were even erected to the memory of horses that had won some famous race, and the maidens of Akragas sometimes built tombs for their favourite song-birds. There were also marvellous paintings there, and there was vast wealth. Once, before this war, a certain Exainetos of Akragas won the two hundred yard race at Olympia, and when he came home, there went out to welcome him three hundred chariots drawn by as many pairs of milk-white horses. In their gymnasium the people used golden strigils and gold vessels for oil. At the door of the house of Gellias, a rich man of the city, slaves stood in waiting all day long, inviting every passing stranger to enter for rest and entertainment,

and once, when five hundred riders came from Gela, Gellias took them all in, and presented each one with new garments, for it was winter. In his cellars, instead of casks and hogsheads, three hundred reservoirs for wine were hewn in the solid rock, and each one held one hundred amphoræ, which is equal to nearly nine hundred gallons. And of the Akragantines Empedocles said that they built as if they were to live for ever, but that they feasted as if they were to die on the morrow; and it is recorded that at a certain marriage eight hundred carriages and innumerable riders brought the bride home at night, while the whole city was illuminated. Moreover, during the war which now began, a decree was issued which forbade a soldier on the watch to be provided with more than two mattresses, two pillows, and a blanket.

Nevertheless their allies defended them manfully for some time, and the strong position of their city helped them at need, as it had doubtless contributed to create that feeling of absolute security which is the most favourable condition for the development of idleness and luxury. It is easy to understand that even a slack defence of such a place might suffice to hold it. Standing on the ruined rampart of Girgenti, at the southeastern point, near the temple of Hera, the traveller can take in the extent of the city at a glance, from the modern town, where stood the ancient acropolis, cresting the hill, round by a wide descending





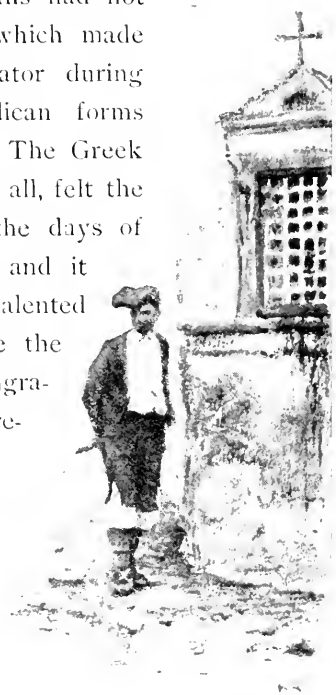
sweep to the right, then westward along the south side, protected by the abrupt falling away of the ground, and from beyond the temples of Zeus and the Dioscuri up the steep hill to the acropolis again. Only on this last stretch could Hannibal see any chance of success, where the old burial ground came up to the walls; and there he intrenched himself and set up his engines of attack, but the citizens sallied out and burned his wooden towers; in digging his trenches, he exposed a great number of dead bodies, from which a plague arose among his soldiers, and he himself died of the sickness. Then his father, Himilcon, lost six thousand men in an engagement with the Syracusans who were advancing to relieve the city. The Greeks were elated and contemplated making a destructive attack upon the Carthaginian camp. The besiegers, as the winter came on, were short of provisions; some even died of hunger; matters looked ill for the rest, and the mercenaries threatened to depart.

But Himilcon learned that an immense supply of corn was on the way to Akragas from Syracuse. He bribed his soldiers to wait a few days, sent out warships, overcame the Greek triremes that formed the convoy, and seized the whole provision. Among the defenders were Spartans and other allies, who began to sell themselves to the Carthaginian general, and presently all the allies deserted almost in a body. The luxurious Akragantines were paralyzed with fear,

for they remembered the horrid fate of Selinus and Himera. Incredible as it must seem, though there was not so much as a breach in the walls, the whole population abandoned the city, leaving the old and the sick to their fate. Himilcon entered at daybreak and slew all these. The rich Gellias had collected such of his treasures as he could gather quickly into a temple, to which he set fire, and he perished in the flames. A few patriots who would not fly destroyed themselves. The vast booty fell into the hands of the Carthaginians without a blow, and Akragas ceased to play a part in Sicily. There is hardly a parallel in all history to such an ignominious evacuation.

Dionysius the scribe, who by the accident of his desperate wound had escaped being banished with the friends of the murdered Hermocrates, was a man who possessed those gifts of courage, eloquence, and cunning by which obscure individuals have from time to time raised themselves suddenly to empire. Yet even such gifts as these could have produced no result without the opportunity for exercising them. After the fall of Akragas, which had been largely due to the defection of the more important allies for the sake of Himilcon's rich bribes, a profound disgust of the existing government, under which such things were possible, manifested itself among the Sicilian people; the conviction grew in the minds of the masses that although a democracy might be the best form of gov-

ernment in times of peace and prosperity, yet, in a moment of public danger, it was absolutely necessary that all military power should be in the hands of a single individual. The Sicilians had not the cool sense of fitness which made the Romans name a dictator during war, and return to republican forms as soon as it was ended. The Greek cities, and Syracuse first of all, felt the want of a strong hand; the days of the democracy were over, and it fell to the lot of the most talented man of his day to restore the tyranny. He began by ingratiating himself with the remains of Hermocrates' party, and being sure of their support, he took the earliest opportunity of exhibiting his eloquence at a general meeting of the people. Himera, Selinus, and Akragas had fallen a prey to the Carthaginians, their vast army was fattening on the spoil got from their latest conquest, from Akragas they would march to Gela, and once there, the fate of Syracuse would be a foregone



PEASANT NEAR REGGIO, CALABRIA

conclusion. The leaders hesitated, the people murmured, no one dared to speak out. Then Dionysius suddenly arose and impeached the Greek generals, the government, the rich and powerful throughout the land, taking, as every great adventurer has done at first, the side of the oppressed many against the overbearing few; nor did any ambitious man ever take that side in vain. Dionysius proposed that the generals responsible for the fall of Akragas should be punished summarily and without trial. This was against the law of Syracuse. A few of the aristocrats, with loud protests, cried out that the speaker was liable at once to the fine imposed by law; but a friend of his rose instantly and bade him go on, saying that he would pay not only the fine imposed upon Dionysius, but all other fines exacted from any who should speak in the same spirit. With fiery energy Dionysius proceeded to the end; the generals were then and there degraded from their office, others were chosen in their stead, and among them Dionysius himself. From this to the sole command was a difficult step. He began by refusing to associate with his fellow generals, hinting that they were in secret understanding with the Carthaginians. The people trusted him, and when he proposed that they should vote the immediate return of all political exiles, they acceded to his request without hesitation. By this means he gained a vast number of enthusiastic friends.

Another opportunity for gaining fresh power soon presented itself. It was clear that Gela would be the next city to fall, and its garrison was under the orders of one of the captains who had sold himself to Carthage at Akragas. Dionysius hastened thither, to find the city in a frenzy of excitement. He presented himself as the protector and liberator of the people, he paid the troops the stipend which had long been owing to them, and he brought the suspected traitors, chiefly the richest in the city, to prompt trial and execution, their property being seized for the public good. Having thus settled matters for a time, he returned with speed to Syracuse. Entering the city at sunset, just as a great audience was leaving the theatre, and being asked what news he brought from Gela, he delivered a magnificent speech in which he told the people that their worst enemies were not the Carthaginians, but their own corrupt and grasping generals. They were selling their country inch by inch for Carthaginian gold, and he would no longer be one of them. His words were received with unbounded applause and wild acclamation; on the following day a public meeting of the people was called, he addressed them again, his friends rose up in force to support all he said, and amid the universal enthusiasm a measure was carried which removed the other generals from office, and conferred upon him the sole military command.

The tyranny was now restored in fact, and all but

acknowledged in name. Dionysius needed only a devoted body-guard to protect him from the assassin's knife, in order to assume the position of absolute lord. He obtained this also, and by the same stratagem which had served Pisistratus for the same end. He called upon the whole available force of armed men which Syracuse could furnish, bidding them meet him in Leontini as if for a great review. That night a great tumult arose in the camp, Dionysius rushed from his tent, declaring that an attempt had been made upon his life, and fled to the acropolis, calling upon all who trusted him to follow him up thither. Then and there the soldiers, to whom he was already a hero and almost a demigod, voted him a life-guard of six hundred men. He was to choose them himself, and he took advantage of the privilege to select a thousand. Armed to perfection and receiving twice the pay of other soldiers, their fate was now bound up with his, and he could count upon every man to the death. The blow was struck, the tyranny was restored, and Dionysius was the despot of Syracuse.

In Syracuse he established himself in the arsenal, which became at once his palace and his stronghold; he strengthened his position by marrying the daughter of the ill-fated Hermocrates, giving his own sister in marriage to the latter's brother-in-law. He caused the people to execute the two men who had principally opposed his advancement, and he issued orders for

gathering together into one army, besides the Syracusans, every soldier of fortune in Sicily who would serve for pay.

What he had foreseen was not long in coming. Himilcon had spent the winter with his army in Akragas; when the spring came, and he no longer needed shelter, he ordered the city to be destroyed and marched upon Gela. The inhabitants determined to send their wives and children to Syracuse, but the devoted women clung to the statues of the gods and to the altars in the market-place, crying out that they would share the fate of their men. As usual Himilcon moved up his battering rams and towers to the walls; but though he broke down great breaches in the fortifications, the besieged men fought with fury by day, and by night even the women and children helped to build up the broken ramparts. In spite of Himilcon's ceaseless exertions the city was held against him until Dionysius came up with fifty thousand men. He formed a plan to surround the enemy and the whole city and to make three simultaneous attacks. The well-conceived scheme failed in execution; Dionysius lost many men, and was at once accused of betrayal, since he had done no better than his predecessors. Yet he kept his command, being most likely preserved from instant death by his life-guard, and by a clever stratagem he so far retrieved himself as to effect the safe evacuation of the city with the women and children, and the sick

and wounded. Two thousand light-armed troops, men of heroic courage, remained behind in the city, and completely deceived the Carthaginians by making bonfires and simulating a tumult in the streets. In the end they also escaped unhurt.

Little by little the Greeks were being driven from city to city towards Syracuse, where the final struggle was to take place. The enemy came upon them as the Huns fell upon Europe many centuries later. The Carthaginians spared neither man nor beast, nor woman nor child, and prisoners were horribly tortured, torn to pieces, and crucified by hundreds. Before such an enemy the people fled to their last refuge like sheep to the fold when the wolves are upon them. That Dionysius should have been able to direct the storm of such a panic and regain all his power and influence proves his genius; that he afterwards attacked Carthage with success demonstrates his masterly military talent; but that he utterly vanquished and blotted out his foes in the end is little short of miraculous.

The spectacle of a whole population hurrying in desperate confusion to their last shelter, women and children and old and sick dying of exhaustion by the way amid the tears and lamentations of the survivors, roused the Syracusan soldiers to exasperation against the leader to whom alone they attributed such disaster; the well-born youths who composed the cavalry

watched for an opportunity to slay him, but finding him too well protected by his mercenaries, they rode on before and reached Syracuse in time to stir up a revolution against him; they seized his house and treasure, and in their blind rage so frightfully maltreated his wife that she died of her injuries. But they had to deal with a man of genius and action who knew no fear. Dionysius had no sooner learned of their desertion than he hastened to follow them with a chosen band of seven hundred men. At midnight he was before the closed gate of Achradina, where brave Hermocrates had been murdered; in an hour the doors were burned down; when the day dawned his enemies lay dead in the market-place, and as the sun rose he was once more master of the city.

And now the Carthaginian advance was checked by the plague, which ever wrought havoc among the Phœnician mercenaries, and Himilcon made a treaty of peace, with an exchange of prisoners and of ships taken in the war, and an extension of the Phœnician territory. More than half the Carthaginian army perished in the pestilence, Himilcon withdrew to Carthage, and the first part of the conflict came to an unexpected termination. The strong man set about consolidating his power.

He occupied the arsenal, and the island of Ortygia, allowing none but his most faithful adherents to set foot upon the island; using the methods of Gelon

and Hiero, he conferred citizenship upon his mercenaries and even upon freed slaves, and created a new body of devoted friends. He matured his plan for dominating all Sicily in order to make war upon Carthage, but at his first attempt at extending his power a mutiny broke out, his chief lieutenant was murdered, and he saw himself obliged to fall back upon his fortified home in Ortygia, while the mutineers encamped upon Epipolæ and besieged the city, setting a price on the tyrant's head. The situation was perilous in the extreme, and for once the iron man seems almost to have lost hope. Yet he held his stronghold grimly, and secretly communicated with certain Campanian soldiers of fortune, while proposing terms of capitulation for himself to the besiegers. In their simplicity they believed him, and many of their force dispersed. Twelve hundred Campanian soldiers swept down like a whirlwind upon the Syracusans, slew all they met, broke through their siege works, and joined Dionysius in the fort. The besiegers now disagreed among themselves and, choosing his time, Dionysius sallied out and defeated them in one of the suburbs, but checked all useless slaughter, that the vanquished mutineers might owe him their lives; and he honourably buried their dead.

Master of Syracuse once more, he entered into close alliance with Sparta. Tyranny was growing popular in theory, if not yet in practice, and the Lacedæmonians,

while still in name recommending a democracy, privately gave their whole support to Dionysius, although their conduct brought them into opposition with Corinth, which faithfully advocated the freedom of Syracuse. Thus strengthened, he began the conquest of Sicily. Henna, which is Castrogiovanni now, and Catania and Naxos fell successively under his dominion, and Leontini surrendered on condition that the inhabitants should receive the citizenship of Syracuse. His plan was to destroy the Greek commonwealths, to spare the Sicelian ones, and to found Italian cities, in order to equalize the various elements and produce a homogeneous Sicilian nation; and as the Syracusans began to understand that he was not cruel but ambitious, and as much for them as for himself, their confidence in him rose and his influence became unbounded. Remembering what Syracuse had suffered during the Athenian invasion, and mindful of his own experience during the mutiny, he determined to extend the fortifications so as to take in Epipolæ. The huge ramparts that still crown the height are his work. Knowing that there was still some danger of revolution in the city, he exerted his whole energy to accomplish this quickly, and the great wall, more than three miles in length and made of large hewn stones, was completed in twenty days. It was built by sixty thousand free men, who received double wages for their labour; thirty-six thousand, in one hundred and eighty detachments

of two hundred each, worked upon sections one hundred feet long, each section being under a master-mason, and every six sections under an architect. Four and twenty thousand men, with six thousand carts, quarried the stone and hauled it up the heights. Most of the stone was quarried in the Latomie, in Syracuse. Dionysius himself hardly left the works till all was finished.

The main wall being built, he soon afterwards prepared to attack Carthage, and set to work upon the vast equipment which he knew to be necessary for such an undertaking, for the success of the Carthaginians had generally been due to their superior numbers and excellent munitions of war. Dionysius worked on a great scale; he built two hundred new ships of war and refitted a hundred and ten old ones; one hundred and forty thousand shields with an equal number of swords and helmets were made, and fourteen thousand cuirasses with their fittings. Great engines were constructed for hurling stones; and it is known that in the year 399 he called together a general meeting of engineers, who planned the first ships ever built with five banks of oars, and the first long-range catapults, though what the range of the latter may really have been we do not know: those in use earlier could hurl a stone six hundred feet.

The first five-banked ship, splendid with gold and silver, brought home from Locri one of two brides whom the despot married on the same day,—a wedding

unexampled, I believe, in Greek history. A few days later he addressed the people and exposed his plans with the fervid eloquence that had seldom failed him, stirring up the hatred that was not yet old, and firing every hearer with the spirit of revenge. The news of the unequalled preparations at Syracuse had already gone forth; the tidings of the master's speech spread like flame through straw.

All Sicily rose, and wheresoever, in cities that once had been all Greek, there were Punic masters, or merchants, or landowners, or travellers, they were put to death; and wheresoever the Carthaginians had torn to pieces or burnt or crucified a Greek, there the Greeks tortured and impaled a Carthaginian.

At last, in 397, when all the African coasts were exhausted by a pestilence that had raged for two whole years, Dionysius declared war, and his ambassadors gave proud warning to the high council of Carthage that she must set free and evacuate every Greek city in Sicily or fight to an issue. As soon as the ambassadors returned, and without giving Carthage time to collect the mercenary troops on which she always most depended, Dionysius struck the first blow, and attacked Eryx, now Monte San Giuliano above Trapani, and Motye, a dozen miles to southward. Eryx surrendered without a blow; Motye had received a small reënforcement from Carthage, and made a brave defence.

In those times the two small islands which lie north of Marsala, or Lilybæum, formed a part of the mainland and enclosed a wide harbour; in the midst of this sheet of shallow water Motye was built upon the little island which now bears the name of San Pantaleo and was connected with the land by a narrow causeway on the northeast side. The town itself was strongly fortified and was one of the most valuable points held by the Carthaginians. Before the arrival of Dionysius the inhabitants destroyed the causeway. Dionysius determined to rebuild it, entered the harbour, and beached his war-vessels north of the little island. He left his admiral Leptines to see to the reconstruction of the dam and withdrew his land forces for a time in order to make a raid upon the Phœnician country. Meanwhile Himilcon reached Syracuse with a small fleet of ten vessels, hoping to draw Dionysius away from Motye; but failing in this intention and having done such damage as he could with so small a force, he sailed back again and appeared before Motye at daybreak, with one hundred of his best ships. Having easily destroyed the few Greek vessels that were lying outside, he at once blockaded the entrance to the harbour, within which the whole of the Greek war fleet was drawn up high and dry. It seemed as if the Greeks were caught in a trap from which they could not escape, but the courage and decision of Dionysius were not at fault, and he turned the tables upon his adversary in a day.

The north side of the harbour was separated from the open sea by a low neck of sand about four thousand yards wide. Across this space Dionysius actually hauled eighty ships of war on chocks, in a single day, and at the same time he moved his newly invented long-range catapults down to the entrance of the harbour. The war-ships he had now launched sailed down in a body and attacked the Carthaginian fleet from seaward, driving it in, and at the same time the astonished Carthaginians, who believed themselves well out of range from the shore, received a terrific volley of stones from the catapults. Himilcon himself would have been driven into the harbour and caught, if he had not at once made good his escape; but he lost no time, left Motye to its fate, and breaking through the line of Syracusan vessels, got out to sea.

During the siege of Motye which followed, the inhabitants made a memorable defence, opposing the engines of the Greeks with every conceivable device, and sometimes setting them on fire; and when at last a breach was made in the walls, and Dionysius believed that the city was in his hands, he still had to carry on the siege from street to street and from house to house through many days and nights. When the last defence was broken down, the Greeks wreaked their vengeance in a wholesale slaughter, in which neither women nor children were spared, until Dionysius himself bade them take refuge in their temples. The Carthaginians

who were taken alive were sold as slaves, but every Greek who was found on their side was crucified at once.

Intending to follow up his victory, Dionysius at once moved upon Segesta, the city of all others in Sicily the most hateful to the Syracusans; but here, as if misfortune were attached to the mere name of the place, he suffered a considerable reverse almost before the siege had begun. Meanwhile the Carthaginians had set on foot for the third time a vast army of mercenaries, and we now hear for the first time that war chariots accompanied the host. Those that had left Carthage at the beginning of the first invasion had been lost at sea.

Dionysius awaited him near Panormus, but only succeeded in destroying some fifty ships and about five thousand of his soldiers, the rest entering the harbour in safety. In a few days Himilcon had undone all that the Syracusans had accomplished; Eryx was won back, Motye was retaken, and the other Phœnician cities of the west found themselves free. In face of such an enemy Dionysius was reluctantly obliged to withdraw to Syracuse. Himilcon now marched eastward and seized Messina, whence the greater part of the population had already escaped. Out of two hundred who sprang into the sea and attempted to swim the straits fifty reached the Italian shore in safety. Himilcon saw the great difficulty of holding Messina and, lest it should be of use to his enemies, determined to destroy

the city. The allies of Dionysius now began to desert him, but he did not lose heart; he fortified and provisioned the Syracusan towns and completed the fortifications of Syracuse, while Himilcon was marching down upon Naxos. At Catania he attacked the Carthaginian fleet in the hope of preventing it from effecting a junction with the land force, but suffered an overwhelming defeat in which he lost one hundred ships and twenty thousand men. Retreating upon Syracuse again, he prepared to make a final stand, while Himilcon advanced upon the city by land and encamped a little more than a mile north of Epipolæ.

Seeing the enormous strength of the fortifications raised by Dionysius before the war began, Himilcon determined to starve the city to a surrender, and built three forts which commanded the southern side of the harbour. Meanwhile, however, reënforcements of ships arrived from Sparta, and the Syracusans, gathering courage, fell upon a detachment of vessels which were bringing corn to the Carthaginians; a naval engagement followed in which the Carthaginians were badly beaten and lost twenty-four ships.

The position of Dionysius was dangerous, but not desperate, and before long the plague, which seems to have accompanied the Carthaginians wherever they went, came to his assistance. The men died at such a rate that it was impossible to bury the bodies, and the condition of Himilcon's camp was too hideous to

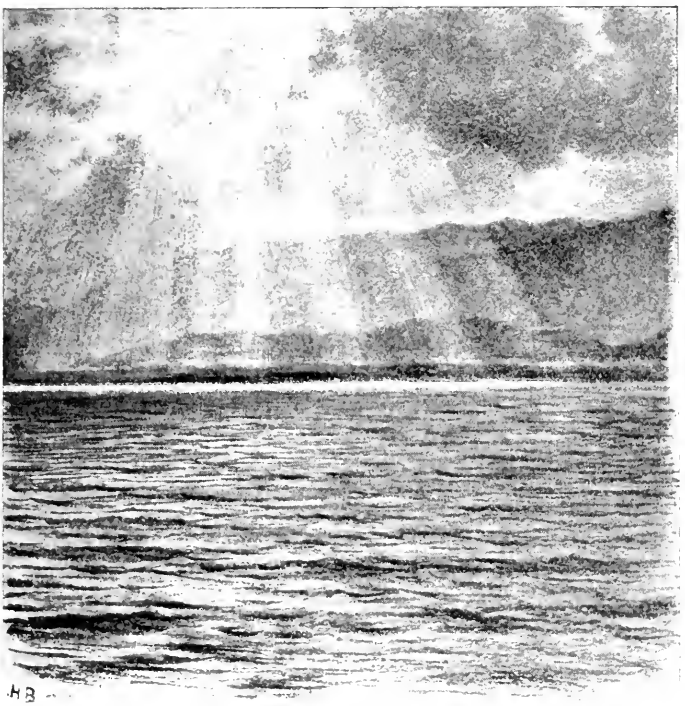
be described. Quick to take advantage of everything that could weaken his enemy, Dionysius now executed a general movement which terminated the war. On a night when there was no moon the Syracusan fleet got under way in the harbour, and Dionysius himself marched a large force round Epipolæ to surprise the Carthaginian camp and one of Himilcon's forts. He sent a thousand mercenaries against the camp, and a body of cavalry, instructing the latter to pretend flight as soon as the enemy came out. These mercenaries were men whom he distrusted, and he coolly sacrificed them for the sake of occupying the enemy on that side. He himself seized the fort on the Olympieum, and sent the cavalry down to take the next, which was near the shore. At daybreak the Greek ships surprised the Carthaginian fleet, and gained a complete victory over the vessels which were afloat. Dionysius himself set fire to forty ships that were on the beach, and a strong wind drove the flames out to the transports. In an indescribable confusion the whole sea force of the Carthaginians was destroyed before their eyes, while every kind of small craft, manned even by old men and boys, put out from the city to plunder the half-burned wrecks, and thousands of women and little children climbed the roofs of the city to watch the tragedy of fire and sword. By land the fighting lasted all the day, and at night Dionysius encamped by the Olympieum. All but forty of Himil-

con's ships were destroyed or crippled, and more than half his army of three hundred thousand men lay dead in the camp or on the field. He humbly treated for his life and safety, and at last for the sum of three hundred talents, which was perhaps all he had left to give, Dionysius suffered him to depart and to take with him, upon his forty ships, those of his soldiers who were Carthaginian citizens. When the Greeks entered the Carthaginian camp at last, it is told that they found within it the unburied bodies of a hundred and fifty thousand men. Thus ended the great Carthaginian expedition for the conquest of Sicily.

At first sight one may wonder why Dionysius did not completely destroy the remains of Himilcon's host, execute their general himself, and drive out the Phœnicians from the western part of the island; but a little reflection will show how much wiser that course was which he actually pursued. The strength of Carthage lay, not in a warlike population, but in the great wealth by which she commanded the service of numerous mercenaries, and although she had now suffered an extraordinary defeat, which was followed by something like a revolution, her losses were chiefly financial, while her resources were practically inexhaustible. By not driving her to extremities, Dionysius both practised wisdom and displayed magnanimity. Moreover, his real ambition was to be the ruler of the western

Greeks rather than a mere conqueror of barbarous nations. By treachery or arms, indeed, he soon got the lordship of the Sicelian cities of the interior, but these were already so completely hellenized as to be practically Greek, and were so situated as to be necessary to him. His fortune, however, did not follow him everywhere, and in attempting to seize Tauromenium he once more suffered defeat, in spite of the most tremendous exertions. Climbing the steep ascent behind the modern town, on a dark winter's night when it was bitter cold, he seized the castle, the 'Castello' of to-day, and thence tried to storm the city; but the Sicelians drove him back into the darkness, slaying six hundred of his men; he himself fell, and barely escaping with his life rolled down the hill, bruised and bleeding, with no arms left but the cuirass on his body. But his defeats were always followed by victories. He crossed the straits and attacked Rhegium on the mainland; failing to take the strong place at once, he laid waste the country. When he took it at last it was by starving the garrison to a surrender. In their agony of hunger the people crept out from the beleaguered city and devoured the grass under the walls, but Dionysius turned cattle and sheep upon it, that cropped it close while his soldiers guarded them. When at last he had possession of a city half full of dead men, he allowed the rest to buy their freedom, and sold the poor for slaves, but he took evil vengeance

upon their brave general Phyton, for he drowned his son, and told the unhappy father what he had done, then scourged him through the city, and drowned him also at last, with all the rest of his family.



STRAITS OF MESSINA ABEAM OF RHEGIUM, NOW REGGIO, CALABRIA

Thenceforward Dionysius ruled the south for twenty years, for Rhegium had been the last strong place that had held out against him. It was at this time, in the

year 387, that the Greeks of Greece had practically abandoned the Greeks of Asia Minor to Persia, and Rome had not yet recovered from the invasion of the Gauls; the Greeks of Sicily alone, by the genius of a tyrant, held in check their strong enemies the Carthaginians, and were themselves united under Dionysius; and he, on his side, maintained a sort of friendly alliance with the Gauls, and had done his best to contribute to the humiliation of Greece. Yet, as the acute Holm truly says, he was the chief stay of Hellenism in the Mediterranean, and without him the Persian from the east might have met the Carthaginian from the west to bring about the total extinction of the Greek power. Little by little, by ceaseless war and untiring activity, he extended his dominion into Italy, and joined the Gauls in the destruction of the Etruscan power, even plundering Cære, not thirty miles from Rome. On the Adriatic coast he was supreme, and if Tarentum still was independent in name it was his tributary in fact, and was forced to receive his colonists into its lands.

So strong a despot might well have been free from little vanities; yet he wrote verses for public competition, and after proving himself a soldier of genius showed the whole world that he was a poet without talent. Fortunate in great undertakings and at the most critical moments of his life, he could not win a prize at Olympia, his horses ran away on the track,

and the ship that brought home his representatives went to pieces on the Italian coast. His small undertakings failed, and his small talents betrayed him into fits of inordinate vanity, followed by disappointment out of all proportion with their cause. In this respect the man whom Publius Scipio called the bravest and keenest of his time was not superior to many other sovereigns and men of genius; for the man of genius looks upon his favourite minor talent as a prodigal son to whom all sins are forgiven, and it is perhaps only he whose chief gift is not beyond question, who dares not trust himself to play with a small accomplishment. Dionysius was great enough to have written even worse poetry than he probably produced.

What he did for Syracuse was so great that after two thousand and three hundred years, the remains of his work belong to the greatest monuments of antiquity, and it is impossible to follow the wall of Epipolæ, or to wander through the enchanted gardens of the vast quarries, without marvelling at the man who deepened the one and built the other.

As is the case with many romantic characters in history, who lived in distracted times and appeared upon the stage of the world, like the gods in the plays of Æschylus, to make order out of chaos by the mere miracle of their presence, a vast mass of fable and fantastic legend clings about the name of the elder Dionysius. He made prisons of the quar-

ries, in which captives were kept so long that they married and had children and brought up a second generation of prisoners; and in order that he might know how they spoke of him he constructed the astounding acoustic cavern still called the Ear of Dionysius. He visited without mercy even the passing thought that an attempt upon his life might be possible; one of his favourite guards was executed for having dreamt that he murdered his master, on the singularly insufficient ground that before dreaming of such a deed he must have often thought of doing it. His own brother one day, when explaining to him the position of a fortress, borrowed a javelin from a guardsman in order to draw upon the sand with its point; the soldier was instantly executed for having given up his weapon. Again, when playing ball, he laid aside his upper garment with his sword, giving them into the care of a favourite youth. One standing by said in jest that the sovereign seemed willing to trust his life to the lad, and the latter smiled at the words. Both were instantly put to death. It is said that he would never trust himself to the services of a barber, but that he used to make his own daughters clip his beard, or singe it with burning walnuts. In meetings of the people he would not speak from a platform, but built himself a stone tribune which was nothing less than a small tower. The legends say that he had his bed surrounded by a broad channel of deep water, crossing

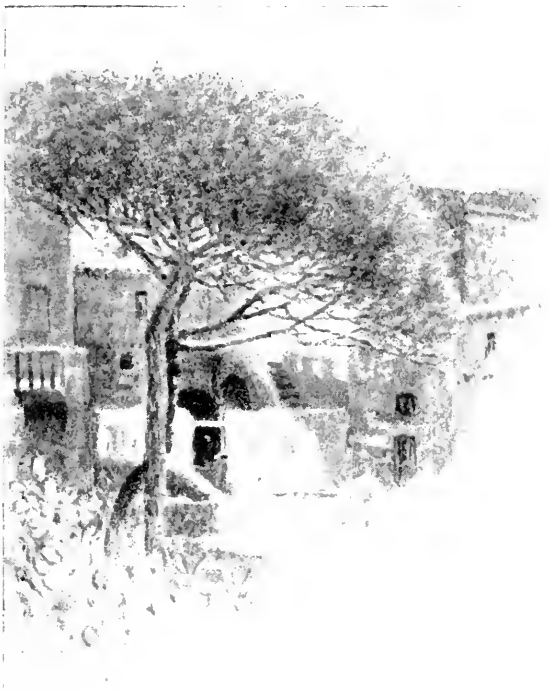
it on a plank which he drew after him; that he wore night and day an iron cuirass, and seldom was without weapons; that he employed an organized band of spies, both men and women, as the first Hiero had done; that neither his sons nor his brothers were allowed to approach him till his guards had changed every one of their garments, lest they should have some weapon concealed about them; and finally that he brought up his eldest son, who became Dionysius the second, in ignorance and solitude within the palace, allowing him no amusement nor occupation except carpentering. To him belongs the legend of the sword of Damocles, which has passed to proverbial use in successive ages, and the fable of Damon and Pythias belongs to his reign.

Of his cruelties, so far as concerns those of which there is historical evidence, it seems certain that they were perpetrated from no bloodthirsty motive, but were necessary to his system of self-defence at a time when the murder of tyrants was so common as to seem natural and logical. Of temperate life and untiring industry, ambition was the only passion that could hold him. Long afterwards, during a drinking bout, Philip of Macedon asked the younger Dionysius how his father had found time to write poetry. "He used the time," answered the son, "which happier men like you and me spend in drinking together." Holm considers it a sign of his firm character that he lived in harmony with

two wives at a time, dining daily with them both together, and indeed he seems to have lived peacefully with them and with his seven children. The great man's only weakness seems to have been for his own verses, and when at last, doubtless for political reasons, the prize was awarded in Athens to his tragedy, the 'Ransom of Hector,' he only outlived that great and final satisfaction to his vanity by a few days. It is even told that in his delight, he, the most moderate of men, drank so deeply as to cause his death. Yet he encouraged joyous excesses among his subjects, as many another despot has done since, and there is evidence that while himself leading what may almost be called a moral life, he preferred for his amusement the society of rakes, gamesters, and spendthrifts. Though it is said that he rarely laughed, he made jests of the kind that seemed witty to historians, but which have either lost their savour by two thousand years of repetition, or offend our sense of fitness by vulgar blasphemy of the gods, to whom, though false in our view, he owed the respect which good taste concedes to all objects of devotion and civilized belief.

Under him the Sicilian power reached its height, and we may make the sad reflection that in the past history of all great nations the acme of strength and culture has been attained under a despot, often under the first who has appeared after a long period of freedom. Dionysius ruled alone during thirty-eight years,

one of the most extraordinary men of any age; he saved Hellenism from destruction in the central Mediterranean and he reduced chaos to order in founding a



GARDEN OF THE CHURCH OF S. NICOLA, GIRGENTI, FORMERLY AGRIGENTUM

new and powerful state; but he destroyed freedom and the very meaning of it, root and branch.

He was succeeded by the younger Dionysius, his

eldest son, who began life at twenty-eight years of age as one of the most powerful sovereigns in the west, and ended it as a schoolmaster in Corinth. Few dynasties have been enduring, of which the founder was a conqueror, and Dionysius the Second exhibited all the faults and weaknesses which were to be expected in a youth who had been brought up without experience of the world, still less of government, whose chief occupation had been a manual art, and whose only amusements had consisted in unbridled excess. It was no wonder that he could not wield the power which had fallen to him as an inheritance, or that he should have been completely dominated by a man who, although himself not strong of purpose, was a tower of strength compared with such a weakling.

This man was Dion, sometimes said to have been the father-in-law of the young prince, but who was really his brother-in-law; a Platonist, a mystic, and a dreamer, wise in his beginnings, devoted in his pursuit of an ideal, honourable, as some weak and good men are, with sudden lapses from the right that shock us the more because their right was so high; a man of sad and thoughtful disposition, who gradually degenerated from a noble beginning to a miserable end.

He conceived the plan of inducing Plato himself to make a second visit to Syracuse, that his influence might save the young Dionysius from destruction, and teach him to make a fact of the Ideal State, and the great philoso-

pher fancied that his own opportunity was come at last and yielded to the tyrant's request. The aspect of the Syracusan court was changed, the sounds of revelry died away, the halls were strewn with sand that the master might draw geometrical figures upon them, and the scapegrace despot became as gentle and forgiving as an ideal Platonist should be. But he became as weak to the influence of his courtiers as he was docile to the new teachings of philosophy, and before long Dion was banished to the Peloponnesus and afterwards to Athens, under the thin pretence of an embassy. For a time Plato remained with the tyrant, against his will perhaps, for Dionysius made him live in the castle on Ortygia and had him closely watched. But a small war in which Syracuse became engaged soon required the attention of the sovereign, and the philosopher was suffered to depart to Greece. Yet he was induced to return a third time, and chiefly through his friendship for the banished Dion; but though he was received magnificently and pressed with splendid gifts which he refused to accept, he was not able to obtain anything for his friend, whose great possessions were presently confiscated, while Plato soon found himself treated almost like a prisoner, if not worse; for he had been constantly advising Dionysius to give up his life-guard, and the soldiers who now watched him, being of that body, hated him and would gladly have murdered him. But a ship having been sent from Greece by

Archytas, Plato's friend, with orders to bring the philosopher home, he was allowed to sail without opposition. "I fear," said the tyrant when they parted, "that you and your friends will speak ill of me when you get home." "I trust," answered Plato, smiling, "that we shall never be so much at a loss for a subject of conversation as to speak of you at all."

Then Dionysius married his sister Arete, who was Dion's wife, to a courtier, against her will, and Dion's gentle nature was roused at last. He raised a small force of mercenary soldiers, in Zacynthus, the island now called Zante, and led them up to make a solemn sacrifice in the temple of Apollo; and though the moon was eclipsed on that very night, to the consternation of his men, his soothsayer Miltas persuaded them that the portent foretold the overshadowing of Dionysius' power, and they were satisfied. A storm drove the five small ships far to southward, and they made Sicily at last at Minoa, a Phœnician town west of Akragas. Dion landed by force but without bloodshed, and marching eastward gathered an army of twenty thousand men. The tyrant was known to be absent from Syracuse, and the letter that warned him of his enemies' approach was lost by the messenger, who had a piece of meat in the same wallet with it, and fell asleep under a tree: a wolf carried off the bag with all its contents. Dion pressed on, and came within sight of Syracuse at dawn; in the level rays of the morning sun he sacrificed to

Apollo for the freedom of the city and of Sicily, and his devoted followers crowned themselves with garlands. At the first news that Dion was at hand, the whole city rose, the tyrant's governor, Timocrates, fled in headlong haste, and the citizens came forth by thousands, in festal garments, to bring Dion through the gates in triumph. Entering the city, he caused it to be proclaimed that he was come to free Syracuse and all Sicily from the despot's hands, and to restore the democracy of earlier days. The wildest enthusiasm took possession of the people. Only a small body of loyal troops held Epipolæ and the castle of Ortygia. The first place Dion seized at once, and he set free all the prisoners who were kept there. The castle withstood him for a time, and the result was an irregular war, in the course of which Dion lost his hold upon the people, was removed from his generalship by them to make way for his secret enemy Heraclides, and was obliged to retire to Leontini. In his absence the people were badly beaten by the tyrant's soldiers, who made a vigorous sally, slew many hundreds, and plundered the houses as if they had been in an enemy's city. Humiliated by this defeat and even more terrified than humiliated, the Syracusans sent messengers entreating Dion to return and save them. They found him in his house at sunset and appealed to him with all the eloquence of terror. His gentle nature, incapable of Achillean wrath, yielded to their entreaties, and calling his soldiers

together he set forth at once to the rescue. At the news of his approach the besieged force withdrew into the castle, and once more the people hesitated as to whether they should admit Dion or not. But before morning the garrison of the castle sallied out again, and by way of hastening a solution of the situation set fire to the city. Dion reached the gates in time to witness the spectacle, but too late to save more than half the city. Heraclides surrendered to his old leader unconditionally, and many entreated Dion to give him up to the soldiery to be dealt with as they chose. But the kind-hearted man gently quoted the maxim of Plato and asked whether, because Heraclides had been envious and faithless, Dion should therefore be wrathful and cruel.

A formal siege of the castle was now undertaken, while the friends of Dionysius were gathering forces elsewhere to rescue it. But Dion's military operations were systematic and complete, the promised assistance did not reach the besieged, and they finally capitulated, on condition that the members of the tyrant's family should be allowed to depart with such treasure as they could take with them.

It will be remembered that Dion's expedition to liberate Syracuse from the tyrant had not been undertaken until his wife had been forcibly married to another. During the whole time and up to the capitulation of Ortygia, both she and Dion's son, and her mother

Aristomache, had been within the castle, helpless to render him any assistance or to communicate with him. As he entered the stronghold, they came forward to meet him. First came Aristomache leading his son, while his wife Arete followed at a little distance with streaming eyes, for she knew not how Dion would look upon her after she had so long been the wife of another. But when he had embraced his son and Aristomache, the latter led forward his wife and spoke these words: "Your banishment has made us all miserable alike, and your victorious return has filled us all with joy, excepting her whom it was my ill fortune to see married by force to another. How shall she salute you now? Are you only her mother's brother, or will you be still her husband?" Then Dion clasped Arete in his arms very tenderly, and they took their son and went to his own house, where he intended to live thenceforward. He was too conscientious to make himself despot in Dionysius' place, yet too aristocratic by nature to found a true democracy. He had freed Syracuse and liberated all Sicily, but he was unable to follow up his advantage. He dreamed of something between a monarchy and a commonwealth, and between those two forms of government there could only be an aristocracy. He attempted to control the people, refused to allow them to demolish the castle, and prevented them from tearing the ashes of the elder Dionysius from the tomb; he kept himself aloof from the masses and chose Corinthi-

ans for his counsellors; his intention, as Plutarch says, was to restrain the government of the people, which, according to Plato, is a warehouse of governments, and to set up a Lacedæmonian constitution. Meanwhile, Heraclides, whose life he had spared, opposed him at every turn and accused him of every crime against liberty, until the gentle Platonist fell into the state of exasperation which is peculiar to weak characters, and, out of sheer weariness and annoyance, consented to the suggestion of his friends that Heraclides should be murdered. It was his own death warrant. The deed being done, in a sudden revulsion of feeling he decreed that the murdered man should have a magnificent funeral at the public expense, and he addressed the people in a speech which was at once a political harangue, an impeachment, a panegyric of the dead man, and an apology for having slain him. After this his character and his intelligence rapidly degenerated; his only son, scarcely more than a boy, committed suicide in a fit of disappointment over a trifle; the furies of Heraclides pursued him even in his own house, and the gigantic spectre of a woman swept the hall of his home at nightfall with a phantom broom; a settled melancholy that was fraught with terror possessed him, and he saw a conspirator and a murderer in every man who approached him. Like the elder Dionysius, he employed spies throughout the city, but unlike him, he lacked the cynical courage to execute unhesitatingly

every one whom he suspected. On pretence of creating an imaginary conspiracy for the sake of detecting it, and increasing Dion's popularity by a general pardon of those concerned, — a trick which could hardly deceive a schoolboy, — his former friends conspired in good earnest to take his life. They came to him at last in his own house, all unarmed, lest they should be searched by his guards and their weapons taken from them, and they trusted to slay him with their hands; but when they could not, because he was very strong, none dared go out to fetch a sword wherewith to kill him, and so they held him fast for the greater part of an hour; but at last one of their number who had remained outside, came to the window and passed in a knife to them. And so they slew him. That was the miserable end of the attempt to restore liberty in Sicily.

The leader of the murderers was one Callippus, an Athenian, who had long been Dion's friend. He instantly seized the power, and reigned thirteen months, a military despot hated by all alike, till he was driven out on his first attempt to extend his dominions. Two or three years later he was slain near Rhegium, and with the very knife by which Dion had died, by two of his fellow-murderers.

Syracuse became the sport of any adventurer who could gain the momentary support of the soldiery, and at last it was the turn of the younger Dionysius, who had succeeded in holding Rhegium and Locri through-

out the confusion of those years. Returning to Syracuse, he showed himself at his worst, and ruled by a system of terror which has rarely been equalled and never surpassed. Not Syracuse only but all Sicily had fallen into a miserable condition; the mercenaries employed by the tyrants at the height of their power overran the country far and wide, supporting themselves by plunder and revelling in every species of licentious excess. Anarchy reigned supreme; Carthage had concluded a treaty with Rome and again stretched out her grasping hand in an attempt to get possession of the coveted island; in utmost fear the Syracusans turned to Corinth for help, imploring the assistance of a general if not of an armed force. Their request was granted, and Corinth sent them a man whose name stands almost alone in history, the patriot soldier Timoleon, he who saved his brother's life in battle by a miracle of reckless courage, but gave him over to a just death when he seized the power and attempted to make himself the tyrant of Corinth.

We contemplate Timoleon's almost unattainable moral greatness with a sort of despair, and we realize that an example may be so perfect as to discourage all attempts at imitation. He risks his life with magnificent recklessness to save his brother from the enemies' spears, and then, with antique virtue, after using every means of affectionate persuasion in vain, he orders the same brother to be executed before his eyes, that his

country may be saved from tyranny; yet being very human at heart, he withdraws from public life, and almost from the society of mankind, to mourn in solitude for nearly twenty years the deed which he would have done again. Emerging at last from his retirement in the hope of setting free an enslaved country, he exhibits, with the most exiguous resources, the most magnificent gifts of generalship, carries all before him in a series of brilliant actions, liberates Sicily, restores democratic freedom, vanquishes the Carthaginians, and establishes just laws. The idol of his adopted people, the arbiter of their destinies, and almost their predestined master, not a thought of holding the rulership assails him, nor is the lustre of his patriotism dimmed by the least breath of ambition; after teaching a nation to govern itself wisely, he retires to the peaceful privacy of an ordinary citizen's condition, and he lives out the calm remainder of his days in the enjoyment of the liberty he has created, and under the rare protection of the laws he has called into existence. It is indeed hard to see how human nature could approach nearer to perfection from the beginning to the end of a career fraught with danger, difficulties, and perplexing problems.

Timoleon's departure from Corinth was accompanied by the most propitious signs and auguries. Demeter and Persephone appeared to their priestesses in dreams, clad in the garb of travellers and promising to accom-

pany and protect the expedition. When Timoleon sacrificed to Apollo in Delphi, a wreath embroidered with crowns and images of victory fell from its place and encircled his head; and when at last his ships put to sea, mysterious fires came down from heaven and floated through the darkness before them, night after night, until the ships made the Italian coast. Nor is the last occurrence perhaps altogether a fable, for in fair weather, and in certain conditions of the air, seafaring men are familiar with the lights of Saint Elmo, the electric glow that sometimes settles on the mastheads and hangs at the yardarms in balls of fire for whole nights together, and which must naturally have seemed to the ancients to be nothing less than a heavenly portent.

The story of Timoleon's war of liberation must be briefly told. In Rhegium he found a Carthaginian fleet, of which the commanders were disposed to prevent his movement upon Syracuse; but in concert with the people of the city he called the Carthaginian generals to a council within the walls, and while long arguments were made to cause delay, Timoleon's fleet slipped out of the harbour and got to sea; then, when he received news that they were under way, he himself disappeared in the crowd, reached his own vessel, which had waited for him, and was beyond pursuit before the council broke up and the Carthaginians discovered that they had been tricked. Sailing down the east coast, he was received with open arms in Taurome-

nium, and he looked about for a second ally. At last the people of Hadranum, now Adernò, being divided into two parties, the one asked help of Timoleon, the other of Icetes or Hicetas, who held all of Syracuse except Ortygia and was in good understanding with the Carthaginians; Timoleon surprised and put to flight his force, and Hadranum opened its gates.

Dionysius was meanwhile driven to last extremities in his castle on the little island; he was hemmed in on all sides, and he saw that whether Icetes or Timoleon won the day, his own lordship was at an end. He sent messengers to Timoleon secretly, and treated with him for the surrender of the island, on the condition of being allowed to escape with one ship and all the treasure he could carry. This was granted; four hundred of Timoleon's men entered the fortress in spite of the vigilance of Icetes, and the Dionysian dynasty was at an end. Timoleon held Catania and supplied Ortygia with provisions by means of a number of small vessels which regularly ran the blockade. Icetes went out to attack Catania in order to destroy the base of supplies. He was not in sight of the latter place when news came that in his absence the Corinthians in Ortygia had succeeded in seizing Achradina, and had connected it with the island by hasty works, and he hurriedly returned to Syracuse. And now a long siege followed, with little fighting, and it came to pass that in the idle days Timoleon's Corin-

thian soldiers came out to catch fish in the ponds near the marsh, and the Greeks who were with Icetes came likewise, so that they made friendly acquaintance; for they had no reason for quarrelling except that they were mercenaries on opposite sides, and had to fight when they were led out to battle. They told each other that Icetes ought to side with Timoleon, and that both should drive out the Carthaginians, and presently it was rumoured that Icetes would do so. Thereupon, without striking another blow, the Carthaginian general suddenly withdrew his whole army and fleet, and sailed away to Africa. They were hardly out of sight when Timoleon led up his force, and in a triple attack drove Icetes out of Syracuse altogether. He had accomplished the first part of his task, and he set to work to reorganize the liberated people.

He now showed his vast intellectual and moral superiority over Dion. The latter's first move was to establish himself in the castle on Ortygia, as if expecting to be attacked by the people he had freed; Timoleon called upon the inhabitants to raze the tyrant's fortress to the ground, and to build the people's tribunal upon the spot, and he began to make them frame laws which should be administered there, while he himself lived simply, openly, and unattended.

Sicily had been reduced to a desperate condition by civil war, and Syracuse, like many other Sicilian cities,

was half depopulated. The grass grew high in the market-places, the deer and wild boar from the forests grazed under the very walls of the towns, and sometimes made their way into the deserted streets. The few rich survivors had retired to strong castles of their own in the mountain fastnesses, as men did in the desolation of the dark ages, and the poor had been enslaved or exterminated. The need of a new population was evident, and Timoleon called upon Corinth for colonists. The mother city sent ten thousand; the rest of Sicily together with Southern Italy sent fifty thousand; the new colonists consented to pay for the land and houses they occupied, and the old inhabitants actually paid for what was already theirs, in order that a public fund might be created. To increase the resources of the state, Timoleon took several cities from the Phœnicians, the most important of which was Entella, and sold them to Greek colonists, a proceeding which is justified when one considers the extent of the injuries done to the Greeks by the Carthaginians, but which doubtless contributed to bring on a new struggle with Carthage. The shameful retreat of the latter's general from Syracuse, almost without having struck a blow, led to his speedy disgrace, and though he died by his own hand, even suicide could not save him from infamy, and his dead body was nailed to the cross.

Carthage now prepared for another great expedition, Hasdrubal and Hamilcar were chosen as generals, the

usual vast army of mercenaries landed at Lilybæum, and another reign of terror began in Sicily. Timoleon's force was insignificant, and his war material was scanty; as he was marching to Akragas, a mutiny broke out in his little army, and a thousand of his mercenary Greeks deserted him and returned to Syracuse. The Carthaginians marched upon Entella, which Timoleon had taken from their people; he had determined to intercept the enemy, when he was checked by meeting with a number of mules laden with parsley; for parsley was used for funeral crowns, and the omen was therefore evil. But Timoleon took some of the leaves, and made a chaplet, and crowned himself, saying that parsley was used also for the victors in the Isthmian Games, and encouraged his men, saying that crowns were given them even before victory. So they took courage and marched on, and a heavy mist hid the enemy from them, while they heard the inarticulate hum of the camp at no great distance; and when the mist began to lift the Carthaginians were already crossing the river, with their chariots and a thousand men who carried white shields. So Timoleon sent down his cavalry, but the chariots drove furiously up and down in front of the enemy's ranks and the horses would not charge them.

Then Timoleon cried aloud to his foot-soldiers to follow him, and his voice was clearer and louder than the voice of a man, so that it was as if a god spoke to them; he took his sword and shield in his hands, and

the trumpets screamed, and he rushed forward, and a great tempest with thunder and much rain had gathered behind him on the hill and came down with him and beat into the faces of his enemies, and the thunder roared, and the hail rattled on their iron breast-plates and brass helmets with a deafening noise, so that they could not hear the orders their officers gave; and the Greeks put them to sudden rout and wild confusion, and ten thousand of them were slain or drowned in the river, for they were weighed down by their heavy armour. This is the first time that as many as three thousand natives of Carthage were slain in a battle. After that the Greeks took the camp and all it held, with many prisoners; and so that expedition ended.

Now the Carthaginians, seeing that the Greeks were the bravest and most invincible of men, hired Greek soldiers to fight for them, and a new expedition was sent out with seventy ships, and sailed to Messina, where a dim war was fought of which not much is known; but three tyrants, Icetes of Leontini, Mamercus of Catania, and Hippo of Messina, were allied with the Carthaginians against Timoleon, and he beat them one by one; yet when peace was made he was obliged to leave Carthage the lordship of the western cities. Of the three despots, Hippo fell into the hands of his own people, and they scourged him and put him to death in the theatre of Messina, gathering thither all the children of the city to see the tyrant's end, that

they might always remember it. Icetes was executed by the Corinthians as a traitor to the Greeks, and because he had drowned the wife and the sister of the son of Dion, the Syracusans also slew his wife and daughters after a mock trial. As for Mamercus, when Timoleon had beaten him in battle, he surrendered; but Timoleon gave him up to the Syracusans to judge him, which they did in the theatre. When they would not hear his defence, he, being unarmed, broke from his keepers, and running at great speed across the open orchestra, he threw himself forward upon his head, against the wall, hoping to die; but he lived to perish on the cross, like a common robber. And with his death the most strenuous part of Timoleon's task was accomplished. He had freed all Sicily from the tyrants, and he had reduced the power of Carthage. He repopulated the deserted cities of Sicily and taught them how to enrich and strengthen themselves, and unlike Dionysius the elder he did not aim at the aggrandizement of Syracuse to the detriment of all the rest: it was under his guidance that Akragas, which had never recovered from the Carthaginian conquest, became once more a strong and independent city.

He spent his old age, afflicted with total blindness, in encouraging the work he had begun; on important occasions, when his counsels could not be spared, he was carried to the theatre where the people went to

deliberate, and every appearance was a triumph, followed by his immediate return to the privacy of the house given him by the city, in which he dwelt with his wife and his children, and in which at last he died, one of the most splendid types of human honour, courage, and wisdom that ever freed a nation from slavery.

Chosen youths bore his body over the ground where the tyrant's castle had stood, and the whole population of Syracuse followed it to the market-place, where the funeral pile was erected. His ashes were buried on the spot, and about his tomb a great gymnasium was built. Games were then and there instituted in his memory, and the proclamation which decreed them called him 'the destroyer of tyrants, the subduer of barbarians, the man who had peopled again great cities that lay desolate, and who had restored to all Sicilians their laws and ancient rights.'

The immediate result of Timoleon's labours was not lasting, but it was long before the spirit he had instilled into the life of Syracuse altogether disappeared, and even under the worst tyranny of Agathocles some of the forms of freedom were preserved. During some twenty years after Timoleon's death, the city remained free, and as is often the case in prosperous times the records of that period are few and confused. Agriculture prospered, commerce throve, architects built, sculptors modelled, and poets made verses;

but history is silent and only resumes her labour to tell of new disasters. The story of the extraordinary man to whom the tyranny of Syracuse next fell is so fantastic that it deserves telling for its own sake, as

A SICILIAN COURTYARD

well as for some resemblance that it bears to the fable of Œdipus.

In Rhegium, in the days of Timoleon, there lived a Greek called Carcinus, of noble birth and great

possessions, and he was exiled by his fellow-citizens, and went and dwelt in Sicily, in the city of Thermæ, which is now Termini, on the north side of the island. He married a woman of that city, and when a son was about to be born to him, he was visited by evil dreams. At that time certain Carthaginians were going to the oracle of Delphi, and he besought them to ask for him the interpretations of his visions. They brought him word that his son should be the cause of great misfortunes to the Carthaginians and to all Sicily; therefore, when the child was born, he caused it to be exposed in a desert place, and set a watch lest any one should come and save it or by any means keep it alive. Yet the child did not die, and the mother watched her opportunity until the guard grew careless, and she took up her child and fled with it to the house of her brother and named it Agathocles, after her own father. The child grew up and was very beautiful, and stronger than other children, and when he was seven years old, his father, not knowing him, praised his beauty and his strength, and his mother answered, feigning sadness, "So would our boy have been, if you had let him live." Then Carcinus repented suddenly of what he had done and turned away weeping bitterly; but his wife comforted him and told him the truth, and he acknowledged his son and brought him home. By and by Carcinus left Thermæ with all his family and

went and lived in Syracuse, where he died soon afterwards, and Agathocles grew up with his mother. She, believing in great things for him, caused a little statue of him to be made and set it up as an offering before one of the temples, and at once a swarm of bees settled upon it and built their hive; and the soothsayers interpreted the sign to mean that the boy should win high fame.

He grew up of great stature and marvellous strength, and a rich man of Syracuse, named Damas, took him under his protection and caused him to be appointed one of the leaders of a thousand in the army. Damas died childless, and Agathocles immediately married the rich man's widow, and became thenceforward one of the most important persons in Syracuse. He kept his military position in spite of his wealth and showed extraordinary military talent; but when he did not receive the advancement he expected, after a brilliant engagement in Italy, and when no attention was paid to his claims, he left the city and seems to have lived for some time as a sort of free lance, while cherishing the most adventurous designs. He even besieged Crotona on his own account, and failing to take it, sought employment as a general of Tarentine mercenaries. Meanwhile, the party that had opposed him in Syracuse fell from power, and he returned to his home, to find himself before long in his old command of a thousand men, opposed to the Carthaginians, with

whom the fallen party had allied itself. In spite of his courage and brilliant actions the Syracusans would not confer upon him the generalship, since it was clear to them from the first that he aimed at making himself despot. Turning upon him as suddenly as they had turned upon the opposite party, they bade him quit the city at once, and sent out men to kill him as he should ride by; but he, being warned, dressed a slave in his own armour and clad himself in rags. He escaped, and the slave was murdered in his stead.

Being now banished, he immediately came to an understanding with his country's enemies, the Carthaginians, and by their influence upon the oligarchy of six hundred which now ruled Syracuse he obtained his recall, and took solemn oath before the people to do nothing contrary to their freedom or their rights. He had now reached the stage at which aspirants to despotism appear as the friends of the oppressed populace, and he did not hesitate to use his power for the destruction of the oligarchy. On pretence of reducing a small revolution in the interior, he was allowed to get together a chosen force, and on the day appointed for his departure he gathered his soldiers in the buildings about the tomb of Timoleon in the market-place. In an address of stirring eloquence he accused the six hundred of setting him aside from public offices on account of his attachment to the people; and as his impeachment turned to a fiery arraignment

and at last to a tremendous invective, the soldiers cried out for the blood of the accused. Then, as if only yielding to pressure, he ordered that the trumpets should give the signal to fall upon the six hundred and upon all who should help or harbour them. The gates were shut against any who should escape death, and the infuriated soldiers stormed every house which might give shelter to their prey. The streets ran blood. Four thousand of the richest citizens were put to the sword, and many perished in attempting to leap from the walls in flight. Some were brought bound before Agathocles to be executed or banished at his will. About six thousand escaped to Akragas.

On the following day Agathocles called a general meeting of the people, and, acting out the favourite comedy of the despot, he declared that he had freed the city from the tyranny of the oligarchy, that he was worn out by the struggle for a righteous cause, and that he refused to keep even the semblance of a power to which he had never aspired. Thereupon, he laid down his military cloak and turned away, well knowing what was to follow. The thousands who were before him were the men who yesterday had plundered the houses of the nobles at his word; they would not lose a leader who might bid them plunder again; they unanimously declared him their general and dictator, and he made a pretence of refusing the dignity only that he might be the more certain of holding it for his life.

From the first he showed that he had profited by the example of Dion the unsuccessful, and of the half-deified Timoleon. Strong, brave, and no longer young, he scorned to surround himself with a body-guard, and took that surer means of safety which lay in binding the populace to him by the joint bonds of gratification and greed; for he gave them what was not his, and promised to give them whatsoever was not theirs already. What the nature of his patriotism was, is clear from the fact that he did not hesitate to ally himself with the Carthaginians, the hereditary enemies of his country.

Tyranny is as often remembered by the people for the immediate advantages it brings them, as for the evils it sooner or later inflicts. The order which Agathocles introduced by force was more advantageous to Sicily than the chaos that had followed when the quarrelsome nature of the Greek people had rendered futile the noble institutions of Timoleon; and though it is true that under Agathocles Sicily produced no famous artist or poet, there can be no doubt but that her wealth and power increased suddenly and prodigiously. It would be impossible to explain otherwise how the tyrant could have so far got the advantage of Carthage, after the old quarrel was renewed, as to carry war into Africa, winning many battles and failing only at the last when he had been on the point of decisive victory.

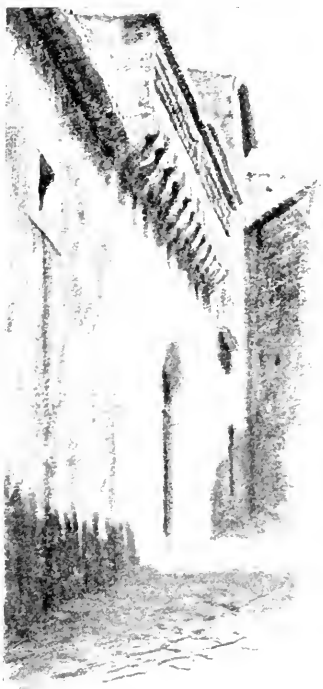
Friendly relations were broken by the discontent of the Carthaginians when their general interfered to

make peace between Agathocles and the Greek cities, and so arranged matters as to give Syracuse the lordship of the island, with the exception of the old Phœnician towns; for the tyrant's treaty had really been rather a personal agreement with Hamilcar than a national affair, and Carthage did not hesitate to set it aside. Then began the usual gathering of mercenaries, and the preparations for a great invasion, while Agathocles, on his side, collected a great force of mercenaries, though not without difficulty; for whereas Dionysius the elder had always succeeded in making Sicily feel that he was her true representative and natural leader against foreign influence, Agathocles was distrusted by many and opposed by not a few, and his frightful cruelties may fairly be ascribed to the exceptional danger of his situation. He was not even a native of the city he ruled. He held his position, not by employing spies and paying life-guards whom he could implicitly trust to destroy the few who dared to plot against his life, but by the wholesale massacre of every party that was organized to oppose him; and when he had thus cleared the situation by bloodshed, he went about with careless courage and without ever showing the slightest suspicion of individuals.

Carthage was not ready for war until he had completely established his supremacy in Sicily, and when at last her fleet put to sea, a violent storm destroyed many ships with the troops they carried. Another

Hamilcar — the name was frequent — commanded the force, and in spite of all losses succeeded in encamping with an army of forty-five thousand men on Mount Ecnomus, the huge headland that juts out to the eastward of Girgenti; and Agathocles encamped over against him, still further east and beyond the salt river. Both armies waited and watched, sending down foraging parties to drive up cattle from the valley. Then Agathocles, having observed how the enemy conducted those small expeditions, laid an ambush for them, fell upon them unawares, drove back the few survivors to the camp, and taking advantage of the momentary confusion, led a general attack. Before the Carthaginians could give battle the Greeks were upon them, filling the ditches that protected their camp and tearing down the stockades. The battle would have been won but for the Balearic slingers, whose slings hurled stones weighing an English pound, and who at last drove the Greeks out; and then defeat followed upon repulse, as an unexpected reënforcement landed from Africa, and defeat became disaster in a general rout, in which no less than seven thousand of the Greeks were slaughtered. Yet strange to say the survivors remained faithful to their leader, who burned his camp and fell back first upon Gela, now Terranova, and at last upon Syracuse, while Hamilcar made a triumphal progress through the island, the cities opening their gates to him as to a liberator. Agathocles seemed lost. He saved himself

by a stroke of astonishing boldness. He determined to leave a small garrison in Syracuse and to invade Carthage without delay, while all her forces were abroad. It was the conception of a man of genius, and though he did not accomplish the conquest of Carthage, which was reserved for the vast power of Rome, he succeeded in freeing Sicily and in re-establishing his despotic position. Hamilcar had pursued him to Syracuse, had besieged the city, and was actually blockading the harbour with his fleet, when Agathocles set forth on his expedition. He waited until the Carthaginian ships put out to capture a convoy of vessels with provisions for the city, and sailed out with sixty men-of-war. The Carthaginians saw him, supposed he meant to give battle, and drew up to await his attack, and by the time they understood that he was heading to southward he had gained enough distance to



STREET IN SYRACUSE TO-DAY

greatly reduce the chances of being overtaken. Nevertheless, the Carthaginian fleet gave chase, while the corn ships quietly entered the harbour, and Syracuse was provisioned for a long siege. The whole affair was one of those brilliant manœuvres that prove the born general.

The Greeks believed that they were beyond pursuit, heading for the African coast, when, on the morning of the seventh day, the Carthaginian ships hove in sight, still in full chase, and gaining visibly. A race for life and death began, in the dead calm, and the oars pulled desperately, hour after hour. If the Greeks could reach the land and intrench themselves, they would have the advantage, for their enemies would have to attack them from the water's edge; but if they were overtaken on the high sea, they could expect nothing but destruction in a battle with a force so far superior to their own; and Syracuse would be lost also. Still the Carthaginians crept up astern, hour after hour, while Agathocles counted the miles that lay between him and the land, and knew that his fate hung by a hair. His men knew it too, and they reached the shore in time, southwest of what is now Cape Bon, in a strong place at the entrance to an ancient stone quarry of vast extent, and they threw up fortifications and beached their vessels. But the leader knew that the ships were a weakness and a temptation to flight, where men were to win or die, and with a heroism that has

seldom been equalled, and commanding an obedience that has never been surpassed, he burned the fleet as it lay on the shore, firing his own vessel with his own hand, while every captain followed his example.

During the fire, the Carthaginians, at some distance from the shore, were filled with joy; but their mood changed when they saw that Agathocles was leading his army to the interior, without waiting to give battle. It was too late to overtake him now; he was entering the richest part of their country with a large army of the bravest men in the world, and men whose only hope lay in victory; the Carthaginians fell to weeping and mourning and draped the bows of their ships with black.

Agathocles marched on without hindrance, seized the rich city of Megalopolis, plundered it, and took Tunes next, only ten miles from Carthage. The great city, even in such sudden and utter need, when her main force was either in Sicily or at sea, was able to send out forty-one thousand men and two thousand chariots to meet the invaders. Agathocles had less than fifteen thousand soldiers, all told; he helped himself by strange stratagems that savour of Homeric times, spreading out the shield-covers of his heavy-armed infantry on staves, to represent a reserve of soldiers that did not exist, and loosing a number of owls among his men, who suddenly took great courage as the birds sacred to Pallas settled blinking upon their helmets and

shields. One thinks of the young Louis Napoleon and the trained eagle that was allowed to fly at his first landing — a trick which Ulysses might have invented and Homer described.

The Greeks fought like madmen, the drivers of the enemy's chariots were shot down and the cavalry pelted to death, the famous heavy-armed infantry charged, the chief general of the Carthaginians was slain, and their ranks wavered, — the next in command turned traitor, it is said, and commanded a hasty retreat, which presently became a rout and massacre, and Agathocles was master of the field. In the Carthaginian camp he found twenty thousand pairs of manacles, brought out to shackle the Greeks who were to have been taken prisoners.

With the small force at his disposal he could not hope to take the strong city, fortified as it was at every point and more than amply provisioned. But it was the policy of Carthage to allow no other town to protect itself by fortifications, lest any should turn against her, and Agathocles seized one place after another, with vast booty. Meanwhile the Carthaginians sent to Hamilcar in Sicily for help, and made horrible burnt sacrifices of many little children to their cruel gods.

Hamilcar received the news of the Carthaginian defeat before Syracuse and, at the same time, the bronze beaks of the ships burned by Agathocles were brought to him. Hoping to prevent the beleaguered

Syracusans from learning the truth, he showed them the beaks as if they were trophies, and proclaimed to them the defeat and destruction of Agathocles, calling upon them to surrender at once; but they held firm, and before long they were informed of the truth in an unexpected manner. For Agathocles had sent a vessel with the news of his victory; it appeared off Syracuse in the morning, and after an exciting race, in which it escaped the enemy's blockade, it entered the harbour with flying streamers, the whole ship's company drawn up on deck, and intoning a victorious chaunt. Hamilcar tried to take advantage of the excitement that reigned in the city in order to storm a weak point, but he was repulsed, and soon afterwards despatched five thousand men to the help of Carthage. Agathocles performed marvels of quick marching, as he darted from one point to another, subduing the cities in succession, but unable to hold them for any length of time, for lack of men. He created a sort of floating domination of fear that centred round him in a movable kingdom wherever he appeared, but which could not under any circumstances become a permanent conquest; he plotted and conspired with native princes and Carthaginian traitors to obtain some influence more lasting than that of the sword, and more than once it seemed as if he might succeed. For instance, there was a certain Ophellas, who had been a general with Alexander the Great and had made himself prince of Cyrene on the African

coast; Agathocles induced him by great promises to join in the conquest of Carthage, and the old soldier, after overcoming the difficulties of a three months' march through a desert country, reached Tunes with over ten thousand fighting men and as many camp-followers, besides women and children. Agathocles did not hesitate to do one of the most atrociously treacherous deeds in history; he wanted the troops without their leader, whose influence might rival his own; he spent a few days in friendly intercourse with him in his camp, and then returning to his own soldiers, accused Ophellas to them of attempting his life. Wrought up to fury by his words, they rushed upon the camp of his new ally, a great number of whose men were absent to collect provisions, and after a short and desperate struggle, Ophellas was slain. Agathocles then took the army into his own pay and shipped the camp-followers with all the women and children to Syracuse. A storm dispersed the miserable convoy, most of the ships sank, one or two were driven as far north as Ischia in the bay of Naples, and but a very few reached Syracuse alive.

Meanwhile, the conspiracy of the Carthaginian traitors broke out in open revolution in the capital, under the leadership of Bomilcar; but they had miscalculated their strength, the movement was crushed, and he himself was executed. This was in reality the end of Agathocles' hopes in Africa; had the revolution suc-

ceeded, he would without doubt have destroyed Bomilcar as cynically as he had murdered Ophellas, and Carthage might have been his; but, as it turned out, the Carthaginians learned their own strength by the failure of the attempt, and from that time forward the power of the Greeks diminished. Not realizing the situation, Agathocles left his son in command and crossed over to Sicily with a small force; for while the Carthaginians had all this time maintained the blockade of Syracuse, Akragas, once more an independent and powerful city, was making an effort to dominate Sicily, and to that end had taken into its friendship all those whom Agathocles had exiled. In a short time, however, Agathocles put a stop to these schemes, and, having effectually checked the Akragantines, had only to contend with the exiled Syracusan aristocracy under Dinocrates. Meanwhile, and in his absence, his son suffered a succession of defeats in Africa, and found himself driven down to Tunes, and so hemmed in that he sent an urgent appeal to his father to return and help him. It was some time before Agathocles was able to leave Sicily, and when he reached Africa, he found himself with a small force opposed to one of those enormous armies which the Carthaginians again and again collected in the course of their wars. They, on their side, did not desire battle unless Agathocles attacked them, and when he did so, they had no difficulty in driving him back to his position with fearful loss, and

the end of the war was hastened by a hideous fire which broke out in the Carthaginian camp on the following night. As usual after a victory, the handsomest of the captives were burnt alive as a sacrifice to the gods; a sudden squall drove the flames from the altar upon the sacred tent, which caught fire and set the neighbouring tents of the generals in a blaze. In an instant the whole Carthaginian camp, consisting chiefly of huts of reeds and of straw, became a sea of fire, and the entire army fled in the direction of Carthage, in the wildest confusion. A large body of Libyans deserted from the Greek army, believing that the flames proceeded from bonfires lighted to celebrate the Carthaginian victory. When they attempted to join the Carthaginians, however, they were taken for a hostile force, in the confusion, and thousands of them were slain. The rest returned to the Greeks, and, being again taken for enemies, were most of them slaughtered. Had Agathocles known the condition of the Carthaginians on that night, he might have struck a decisive blow; but the truth was only known in the morning, when the remainder of the Libyans deserted in a body.

The situation was now desperate, and Agathocles attempted to escape to Sicily, intending to leave the rest of his army to its fate. His son, who was to have been left also, discovered his father's treachery, and disclosed it to the soldiers, who seized Agathocles and loaded him with chains. It was not until a false

alarm of the enemy's approach was raised in the camp that the tyrant was released from his bonds, in order that he might lead the Greeks in a final attempt to save themselves. But Agathocles had more regard for his own safety. He was brave to recklessness, but not devoted; when a cause was lost, he abandoned it. With a few faithful followers, he got on board a small ship and slipped away in the night. The next day the soldiers murdered both his sons, and treated with the Carthaginians for peace, which was granted. Those of the Greeks who refused the terms were either crucified or were forced to work in chains upon the lands they had laid waste but a few months earlier. It is said that the sons of Agathocles were slain on the anniversary of that day on which their father had murdered Ophellas.

But the career of the great adventurer was not yet over, nor was his influence in Sicily by any means gone. Landing in Selinus, he gathered a small force, which he led at once, with the unerring instinct of the born tyrant, against Segesta, the ancient rival and enemy of the Selinuntines. After laying a heavy tribute upon the city, he suddenly accused the citizens of attempting to murder him, and turned his soldiers upon them with orders to spare no living thing. He caused the rich men to be tortured before him, till they revealed the hiding-place of their treasures, and then had them put to death. Only the most beautiful boys and girls were spared to be sold as slaves in

Italy. The city was levelled to the ground, and the very name of the place was changed when he gave the site to be inhabited by those of his adherents who would take it. That was the end of Segesta, and of the great city that in its day had brought so much evil upon Sicily; nothing survived the destroying wrath of Agathocles but the little lonely theatre high on the overhanging hill, and the great temple that still stands in its dark beauty upon the deserted mountain side.

But this was not all. The army of Africa which he had abandoned in its last need had murdered his two sons, and they also must be avenged. He sent word to his brother Antandros to take vengeance upon all the relatives of the soldiers he had left behind him in Africa, and Antandros executed the order to the letter. Thousands of old men, women, and children were driven down to the seashore and slaughtered on the beach like sheep. The sea was red with their blood and none dared to bury their bodies.

Gathering strength, as it were, from each new deed of terror, and imposing himself upon the Sicilians by fear rather than by strength, he turned against the party of the exiles, whose army counted nearly thirty thousand men, and with a force of scarcely six thousand defeated them totally in a single battle. It is needless to say that he massacred in cold blood several thousands of the prisoners he took, but it is a strange fact that he spared Dinocrates himself, treated him

with the greatest kindness, and employed him as a general of his troops during the rest of his life.

From that time forward the power of the hoary tyrant was unchecked, and he extended his dominions far up the mainland and through the islands, laying Lipari under tribute and seizing Corcyra, which is Corfu, after completely vanquishing a Macedonian fleet; and when the people of that island complained that he laid waste their land, he laughed and said it was the vengeance of the Sicilians because Ulysses, an island man, had blinded the Sicilian shepherd Polyphemus long ago; and again, on his return from that expedition, he massacred two thousand of his soldiers who dared to demand their pay that was overdue. He plundered Crotona, too, by a piece of outrageous treachery, and the gradual decay of the great southern city began from that day, and continued through the wars that followed; and he who stands by the solitary column which is all that remains of Hera's temple, may remember that Agathocles must have sacrificed there in gratitude to the gods for the abomination they had permitted him to work in the beautiful city.

He made himself also a friend of Ptolemy Soter and married that king's daughter by Berenice; and he gave his own daughter to Pyrrhus the Epirote conqueror; he also allied himself with Demetrius, king of Macedonia, who was called Besieger of Cities, and he perhaps dreamt of conquests in the east. But most

of all he desired to humble the Carthaginians and to be revenged upon them for the defeats he had suffered at their hands, and he was seventy-two years of age when he began to fit out a great expedition against them.

But his destiny overtook him before his ships were ready to sail out from Syracuse. He had a favourite slave, named Mainon, whom he had brought from Segesta and trusted, whose eyes had looked upon the slaughter of his people and had seen his home levelled to the earth; and though this slave smiled, and did his service, and was promoted to high office, he would not forgive, and he waited for his opportunity more than sixteen years. Then he took a tooth-pick which the tyrant used, and he rubbed upon it a very subtle poison, which bred a dreadful corruption, with unspeakable pain, first in the mouth and by and by through the whole body. So when Agathocles had lost even his power of speech, Mainon and those who hated him took him and laid him still alive upon his pyre; and so he perished, in the year 289 B.C., as strange a compound of genius, cruelty, reckless courage, and shameful faithlessness as ever ruled by alternate terror and popularity.

It is said that during the awful and protracted sufferings caused by the poison, he formally presented the Syracusans with their freedom, hoping, perhaps, by a piece of theatrical magnanimity to obtain the privilege

of dying in his bed. We do not know the truth, but he was no sooner dead in the flames of his own funeral pile than the people seized upon his possessions, destroyed his statues, and banished all his mercenaries, attendants, and creatures. Even Mainon, who had delivered them of the tyrant, fled from the city. He afterwards raised a force among Agathocles' veterans and attempted to seize Syracuse, but was successfully opposed by the people, who chose a certain Icetes for their general. As Holm says, with his usual keenness, it is clear that Syracuse remained a free city for a time, as the citizens immediately made war upon each other.

The days of Sicilian unity, such as it had been under Dionysius and Agathocles, were over, and were never to return. Icetes seized the tyranny of Syracuse, and tyrants sprang up in other cities, while Carthage still held her possessions in the west, and the Italian mercenaries of Agathocles founded a state of some power in the north, calling themselves Mamertines from Mamers, the Oscan god Mars, familiar in Roman mythology. It was to be foreseen that during the internal struggles which decimated the population of Syracuse, and surely destroyed its power, the Carthaginians would make another attempt at conquest. They appeared with a hundred ships and fifty thousand men and laid siege to the city as of old. Then Syracuse appealed to Pyrrhus, once the friend of Agathocles,

who was called the Eagle and the Alexander of his day, and whose alliance had already been sought by Tarentum against the Romans. He dreamed of conquering all Sicily, all Italy, all the world, and he equipped himself for a great struggle, and carried war into the heart of the Roman country. He beat the Romans in battle, but he knew, and said frankly, that a few more such victories would ruin him. He was in winter quarters in Tarentum when the Syracusan ambassadors came to him and implored his help. Hoping for easier conquests, he set out for Tauromenium with his army and his famous elephants. The Carthaginians did not await his coming, but withdrew with their fleet and their forces, and he entered Syracuse in triumph; the rival factions united to deliver up their city, their fleet, their army, and their treasure to his care. But he was determined to drive the Carthaginians out of Sicily altogether, and he now advanced westward with more than thirty thousand men, accompanied by two hundred ships that sailed round the coast.

Before Eryx, the lofty stronghold above Drepanon, a position which even now looks almost impregnable, he went forward alone and fully armed, and made his vow of games and sacrifices to Hercules; the trumpets sounded, the scaling-ladders were set against the walls, and he himself was the first to reach the rampart. Hand to hand he grappled with the foe, stabbing, thrusting, wrestling with superhuman strength, unhurt

in the thick of the perilous fray, till men shrank away from him in awe, as if he had been a god, and the fortress was taken with great slaughter. A half-ruined mediæval castle, partly a town gaol, is built round all that remains of Aphrodite's temple — a bit of marble, a tank hollowed in the rock, and the marvel of Sicily lying far below in a haze of colour. As he stood there, the Molossian king must have felt that he could take the island in the hollow of his hand; and so he did. But he used his conquest ill, and he tried to press the people to serve under him against Carthage, until they rebelled; and he murdered some of the great in Syracuse, as the tyrants had always done; but before his expedition was ready he found himself so hemmed in by treachery, and smouldering revolution, and sedition, that he took an excuse to go back to Italy and left the island to itself. It is told that as he sailed away he looked back, and said to those about him that they were leaving behind them a great field, in which the Romans and the Carthaginians might exercise their arms. And so it came to pass, for he was beaten by the Romans at the river by Beneventum, on the same ground where Charles of Anjou destroyed Manfred and his army fifteen hundred years later, and where many other famous fights were fought in after times.

With the reign of Hiero the Second the story of the Greeks in the south hastens to its close, while the vast shadow of Rome spreads wide over the mainland and

the islands. With the departure of Pyrrhus and the consequent freedom from all restraint, the old troubles broke out in Syracuse, the usual consequences followed, and while the citizens took one side, the soldiers took the other. The troops chose two generals, Hiero and another; they entered the city by treachery, got possession of the power, and from that time Hiero appears alone in command. He was a man of no great birth, but as soon as he had made himself ruler, the usual fables and legends were told of his childhood and early years; how he had been exposed to die of hunger as an infant, and afterwards recognized by his father; how, when he was a boy in school, a wolf rushed in and tore his tablets from his hand, and how, when he ran out to follow the wild beast and get them back, the schoolhouse fell in, and he alone was saved of all the children; owls perched upon his lance, and eagles on his shield, in short, of him was told the whole cycle of fairy tales, which, for the people, distinguished the great man from the common crowd. Yet in one respect he was unlike the rest of those strong men who had grasped the power with rude hands and held it with an iron grip before him; he was young, kind, and gentle, and after the first bold stroke he seems to have held his own, or what he had taken for his own, more by the love of his subjects than by any rougher means. To strengthen his position he married the lovely Philistis, through whom he allied himself, by the female line,

with the great house of Dionysius. Of all the beautiful heads which we find upon the gold and silver coins of Sicily, and there are many, none can compare with that of Hiero's queen. One may fancy that Helen of Troy had such a face, or Semiramis, or divine Athene herself, but it is hard to believe that so fair a woman ever lived; and if such little history of her as has come down to us be true, she was as good and wise as she was beautiful.

COIN WITH THE HEAD OF QUEEN PHILISTIS

Hiero could no longer hope to face Carthage in war as Agathocles had done, still less to stem the tide of Rome's advancing might; he could not even hope to rule all Sicily, and he contented himself with opposing the nearer and more dangerous enemies of Syracuse. Foremost of these were the Mamertines, who had already given Pyrrhus trouble and whose compact strength was penetrating into the interior of Sicily like a wedge. Hiero did not ally himself with the Romans, but succeeded in keeping on good terms with them by occasionally doing them a service, and while they were engaged in conquering the people of Rhegium, he endeavoured to make himself master of Messina on the other side of the straits. After taking a number of small towns belonging to the Mamertines, he fought a pitched battle with them near Messina itself and so

completely defeated them that they were about to abandon the city, when a Carthaginian fleet appeared, not with the open intention of helping the Mamertines, but with such a considerable force as left no doubt of their ultimate intentions, in Hiero's mind. Contenting himself with the victory he had won, he withdrew to Syracuse, where the people crowned him king with great festivities and rejoicing. From this time forward, Messina was coveted by three powers,—by Hiero himself, by the Carthaginians, and by Rome; and as the population divided itself into two parties, the one for Carthage, the other for the Romans, it was almost a foregone conclusion that the latter should gain the upper hand. And so it happened. The Mamertines sent an embassy to Rome from Messina, asking for help, in the year 265 B.C., and the favourable answer returned by the Romans became the cause of the first Punic war.

But this was not the end of Hiero's reign, for the events which followed occupied a considerable time and it was not until he had governed more than fifty years, and was nearly ninety years of age, that he at last left his kingdom to his grandson, who, after a series of mistakes chiefly attributable to his advisers, lost his life by the hands of conspirators and left his kingdom a prey to the Romans.

It must not be forgotten that during Hiero's long reign, Sicily became the battlefield of Rome and Carthage, as Pyrrhus had seen that it must, and that the

first part of the great struggle for empire occupied no less than three and twenty years, during which the war was waged without ceasing from one end of Sicily to the other, through more than half of Italy and over many hundred miles of sea. It must be remembered, however, that the first Punic war was called the Sicilian war in Rome, and that the first move of importance made by the Romans was the capture of Messina, or perhaps, as we should say, the occupation of that city, since Caius Claudius got possession of it without striking a blow. As the Carthaginians had frequently done on former occasions, they now landed their forces at Lilybæum and marched along the southern coast towards Akragas, which now becomes Agrigentum in history. But the situation was not the same as in former times, since the adversary of Carthage was no longer Syracuse but Rome; and it was the object of Hanno, the Carthaginian general, to make alliance with the Sicilian cities against a common enemy instead of destroying everything he found in his way, as his predecessors had done. Hiero and the Syracusans joined him, as Agrigentum had already agreed to do, and the Sicilian armies moved up to the neighbourhood of Messina, where it was expected that the fighting should begin. Before attempting to bring over his troops the Roman general, who was the consul Appius Claudius, attempted to persuade both the Carthaginians and Hiero to retire. As soon as he had received their

refusal, he brought a large force over by night, in all manner of little craft, of the roughest and poorest description, whereupon he got the nickname 'Caudex,' which may be interpreted to mean the trunk of a tree hollowed to form a boat, in fact what we familiarly call a 'dug-out.' When one considers the difficulty of navigating the straits of Messina at the present day, when steam vessels under way sometimes become unmanageable in the currents and are driven into collision, it must be admitted that what Appius Claudius accomplished was no light undertaking, even with the help of fishermen and boatmen who knew the waters; yet the immediate result of the daring move was of less importance than might have been expected. Hiero and his troops were nearer to Messina than the Carthaginians, and sustained the first attack, the result of which was so much to their disadvantage that Hiero withdrew towards Syracuse on the following night with all his force, and evidently with the intention of withdrawing from his alliance with Carthage as soon as possible. Left to deal with the Carthaginians only, the Romans found them strongly intrenched between the little lagoons, which are still to be seen near the Faro, and the sea, and after a fruitless attempt to carry the works Appius Claudius left a garrison in Messina and made a move against Syracuse. He accomplished nothing, however, though he exposed himself to great personal risk, and he soon afterwards retired to Italy.

In a book of the present dimensions it is impossible to narrate in detail the stirring events of the first Punic war, even so far as they concern Sicily. The reader to whom German or Italian is familiar should read the masterly work of Holm, whom I have followed very closely in the main, and of whom Professor Freeman says that he appears to have collected everything of value in Sicilian history, and from the most varied sources. The principal matter with which we are concerned is the general condition of affairs in the south, when the first war with Carthage began, and the general result upon the country when the war ended, after a duration of twenty-two years.

When Pyrrhus had been decisively beaten, Rome ruled the south of Italy to the Straits, having gradually got possession of all those rich Greek cities, and their dependencies, which had still refused to acknowledge her supremacy after she had finally defeated the Samnites and Gauls at Sentinum in 295 B.C. Her occupation of Messina gave her a hold upon Sicily, which was before long greatly strengthened by the more or less voluntary submission of a great number of other cities that foresaw the result of the struggle and wished to be on the winning side, even though the Romans were exacting allies. As for Hiero, he waited and temporized, with a skill at which we can only guess, but which proves him to have possessed that true historical sense that alone can

give a keen intuition of future history, and which has been possessed by every really great statesman in all times; and after manœuvring to avoid anything like a battle with the Romans, so long as he was still nominally on the Carthaginian side, he became convinced that the Romans were to be the winners, and he openly allied himself with them. A Carthaginian fleet which arrived near Syracuse soon afterwards, ostensibly to help him, but of course in the hope of getting control of the city as a base of operations, sailed away again. The conditions of the alliance acknowledged Hiero as king of a small territory in the southeast corner of the island, but required of him the payment of a proportionate tribute to Rome, and it is no wonder if Hiero, remembering the deeds of his predecessors, who had never really consolidated their power, should have supposed that Rome could conquer Carthage with comparative ease. From the outbreak of the first Punic war to the destruction of Carthage, the fight lasted a hundred and eighteen years; but though Hiero was deceived as to the magnitude of the memorable struggle, his judgment of the result was correct, and his instinct was not at fault in regard to the immediate advantages of the alliance he made. If he had remained the friend of Carthage, there can be no doubt but that Syracuse would have become their chief stronghold, instead of Agrigentum, and would have suffered the final dis-

aster which overtook that city. Instead, and without at any time performing any brilliant action, or winning any great battle, he shielded Syracuse from danger throughout his reign, and at last made himself so indispensable to Rome that she was forced to accept from him a present of money, which the Senate would have given much to refuse, for the sake of Rome's dignity; yet, as soon as the first long war was over, he helped the Carthaginians to put down the great mutiny that broke out in their own army.

His character was upright and honourable in the extreme, and while protecting his small kingdom from the consequences of the war which was being waged between the two great nations, he devoted himself to its welfare in every other way, improved its agriculture and made it one of the most important trading states in the world, at a time when the commerce of Carthage was necessarily greatly reduced. The position occupied by Syracuse under Hiero may aptly be compared with that of Belgium from the date of its independence to the present day, though under a totally different form of government, and in widely different conditions; but a solid modern representative government possesses over the very best form of the ancient absolute monarchy the inestimable advantage that its stability at no time depends upon the genius of an individual, and therefore, to use a comparison from commerce, it bears the same relation to absolutism that a long-

established corporation bears to an individual banker who has no partners.

While the Romans were besieging Agrigentum, losing a fleet at Lipari, winning battles in the west of the island, slowly driving their enemies back and establishing their power with that astonishing comprehension of military supply which they early displayed in warfare, Hiero was enriching Syracuse, extending his trade and multiplying those resources of wealth and provisions which made him indispensable to the Romans themselves. His success in this respect proves what Sicily could do in peace after a century and a half of bloodshed, or much more, if one choose to go farther back, beyond the first Carthaginian invasion — a century and a half of foreign wars, internal dissensions, race struggles, and cruel tyrannies. The same boundless recuperative power is in the island to-day, and the time is not far distant when the commerce and manufactures of Sicily will equal that of all Italy, from the straits to Florence, and will compare favourably with that of the whole Italian peninsula.

Hiero's government has been described as a wise combination of magnificence and economy, of strength and gentleness; he dealt with foreign powers in the name of the Syracusan people, not in his own; he refused the outward insignia of royalty, and seems to have lived simply in the vast city he had restored and beautified, surrounding himself with such men of tal-

ent as he could attract to Syracuse. He made presents of great value not only to Rome but to Egypt, and even to Rhodes, most often in the form of corn and probably in times of scarcity; but we hear no tales of his own extravagance, still less of any excessive exactions, whether to satisfy his own caprices or for any purpose of aggrandizement or conquest. His was a model government for times of peace; it lacked every element, except wealth, which could have made it successful in war, and would have been obliged, like Carthage, to employ mercenaries altogether, for lack of a standing army. Two great nations, the one warlike, the other commercial, tried the two methods on a vast scale, and Carthage, the commercial nation, lost in the end, and the poor Roman annihilated the rich Phœnician.

The greatest man at Hiero's court was without doubt Archimedes, and the most extraordinary of Hiero's works, though by far the least useful, was the ship of four thousand and two hundred tons which he sent to Alexandria as a present to Ptolemy.

Archimedes was born in 287 B.C., being according to some authorities a relative of Hiero's family. He must certainly be ranked with the greatest mathematicians and mechanics that ever lived, and his natural gifts developed to the proportions of genius in the congenial atmosphere of Syracuse. It will be remembered that the Syracusans at all times showed consid-

erable inventive talent, especially in the arts of war, and that the elder Dionysius held a sort of congress of engineers and shipbuilders, who designed the first ships that were built with five banks of oars, as well as the long-range catapults which did such execution upon the Carthaginian fleet, when planted at the entrance of the harbour. The magnitude of the works which remain in Syracuse, the astonishing ease with which the builders handled the great masses of stone, the marvellous beauty of the theatre hewn out of the live rock, by sheer quarrying and without any builder's work, the graceful curves and the harmonious proportions of the amphitheatre, which far surpasses the Roman colosseum, and which almost rivals it in size, all these show to what a height the art of architecture, the science of mathematics, and the skill of the stone-cutter were carried in the only city of that day which rivalled Athens and Alexandria. From his earliest youth Archimedes must have watched the builders at work and studied the plans and sketches and working drawings that were used on the spot, and his intensely practical genius must have begun to grapple with the greatest problems in mathematics and the most difficult theorems of geometry, long before he dreamed that he possessed the power to solve the one or demonstrate the other. The results his studies have left to the world are enormous, and can hardly be completely understood without some

mathematical learning. His method of squaring the parabola was the first step towards all accurate measurement of curved figures. His discovery of the relation between a cylinder, of which the height equals the diameter, to the greatest sphere it can contain, has remained for all time one of the greatest mathematical feats accomplished by the human mind. His theory of the centre of gravity justified Lagrange in calling him the father of mechanics. He was the discoverer of specific gravity, which is one of the chief foundations of modern chemistry, and it was when he found, in testing a gold crown for the king, that the difference between the weight of any body when weighed in the air and when weighed under water is equal to the weight of the volume of water which the object displaces, that he uttered his memorable exclamation, 'Eureka!' 'I have found it!' That he should have invented the lever as a mechanical engine is impossible, but he undoubtedly invented some of its applications, and he must have discovered its laws when he said, 'Give me a place to stand and I will move the world.' Holm doubts whether he actually set fire to the Roman fleet with a burning-glass, when, after Hiero's death, the city was besieged by Marcellus; but the historian cites two interesting parallel instances to prove that such a feat was possible. In 514 A.D. Proculus is said to have fired Vitalian's fleet before Constantinople by the same means. Further,

in 1747 Buffon succeeded in setting fire to wood at a distance of a hundred and fifty feet, and in melting lead at a hundred and forty feet, by means of a system of one hundred and sixty movable mirrors, by which, in the month of April, and when the sunlight

PEASANT WOMAN OF MONTELEONE

was not strong, he concentrated the sun's rays upon a point. Archimedes invented countless machines of less importance, such as the hydraulic serpent, which was probably the instrument worked by a single man in pumping out Hiero's ship. His whole life was

spent in the application of mathematics and mechanics to useful needs in peace and war. His end was characteristic of his life, for when Marcellus, on taking Syracuse, gave orders that no one should harm him, it is said that a soldier came upon him unawares and stepped upon the figure he was drawing in sand. The man of genius protested sharply against the disturbance. The soldier drew his sword and killed the greatest man in the world with a foolish laugh.

We have in Athenæus a very elaborate description of the great ship which Hiero built and launched inside the harbour of Syracuse. Judging from the nature of the ground, and with some knowledge of shipbuilding, I think that it would have been impossible to build a vessel of four thousand tons and more in the arsenal near Ortygia. The work must have been done in the low land by the shore, outside the gate, and between it and the swamp.

Athenæus says that Hiero brought enough timber from Mount Etna to build sixty triremes and that he got planks and lumber for various purposes from other parts of Sicily and from Italy. Archias the Corinthian was the chief builder, and three hundred workmen were employed only to trim the timber. As soon as the planking was finished it was covered with sheet lead, as we use sheet copper. The hull was built in six months, and Archimedes launched it by a system of screws worked by a few persons. The

vessel was bolted with brass, and brass nails were used, the holes being plugged with lead, driven in upon tarred canvas. The ship was constructed with twenty banks of oars, and here it is as well to say at once that nothing whatever is known as to the arrangement of the banks, even in the ordinary trireme; the late Professor Breusing, who was not only for many years the director of the celebrated naval school in Bremerhaven, but also a very eminent philologian, has completely destroyed the old-fashioned belief of scholars that three banks of oars situated one above the other could under any circumstances be pulled at the same time. Those who are interested in the subject may consult his invaluable work, 'Die Nautik der Alten.' That Hiero's ship had at least three decks is certain from the otherwise confusing description of Athenæus. He says that it had three entrances, the lowest leading to the hold, which was reached by two long ladders; the second gave access to the eating-rooms, and the third was for the soldiers. A great number of rooms are described, of which the floors were made of mosaic and depicted very beautifully the whole story of the Iliad. On the upper deck was a gymnasium, and also a garden filled with all sorts of plants, set in casks full of earth, and there were walks shaded with awnings, and a temple to Venus paved with Sicilian agate, the walls and roof being made of cypress wood and the doors of ivory and citron. There was a state cabin, containing five

couches, a bookcase, and a clock set into the ceiling, and there was a complete bath having a tank lined with marble from Tauromenium. There were also stalls for ten horses on each side. In the fore part of the vessel there was a large fresh-water tank made of wood and tarred canvas, and holding two thousand measures; there was also a fish tank filled with salt water. Figures of Atlas at well-proportioned intervals, and apparently carved in wood, carried the rail or were placed outside the bulwarks to support the great weight of the wooden turrets. There was a catapult on deck which hurled a stone weighing three talents, or an arrow twelve cubits long, equivalent to eighteen feet. The vessel had three masts, each carrying two yards, which latter were fitted with a curious device for dropping heavy weights upon an attacking vessel. Finally, the bulwark was protected with iron throughout, and there were a number of very long grappling hooks.

This vast construction appears to have been launched and sent to sea as a present to Ptolemy during a time of dearth in Egypt, with an enormous cargo, consisting of sixty thousand measures of corn, ten thousand jars of Sicilian salt fish, five hundred tons' weight of wool, and five hundred tons of other freight.

The reign of Hiero the Second connects the story of the Greeks with that of the Romans, and his alliance with the latter helped to determine the future

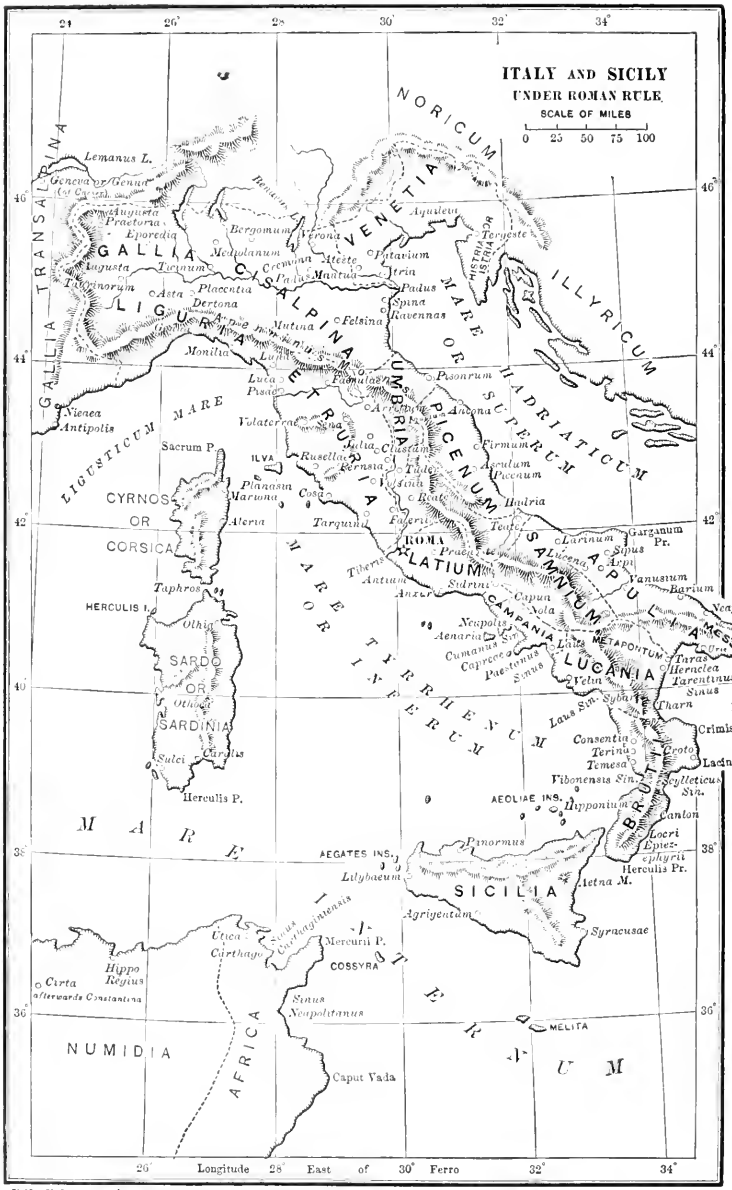
position of Sicily; the destinies of the southern mainland were already decided, and Italy was altogether Roman. One of the most important turning points in Roman history was the subjugation of the great island, which became Rome's first province, because it was too thoroughly Hellenic to be incorporated in the Republic. The influence and domination of the Greeks in the south had lasted, at the beginning of the first Punic war, from about 700 B.C. to 264 B.C., that is to say, more than four hundred years, during which the original elements of the population, as well as the greater part of the Phœnician colonies in Sicily, had become completely hellenized in speech, manners, and culture, and to a great extent also in blood, by constant intermarriages in time of peace. The reason why greater Greece never became a consolidated empire lay in the Greek character, and not in the lack of enterprise, of military ability, or of a common interest. Had the whole south at any time remained united for a century, it would have easily grown to be a match for Carthage. The astonishing success of Gelon, of the elder Dionysius, and of Agathocles, are sufficient proof that this is true. But the Greek had neither the Roman's conception of political unity, nor the Carthaginian's commercial talent. He was as incapable of sinking his highly original personality in the ranks of an organization as he was of devoting his

whole energies to money making; he was a free lance rather than a trained soldier; an artist, not a middle-class citizen; a man of genius, not a banker. In the heat of enthusiasm there were few feats which he could not accomplish, but his restless blood could not brook the daily round of a humdrum existence. In war he loved the brilliant pageant, the high pæan song, the splendid arms, the woven garlands, the air of triumph before the battle, and the trophy and the sacrifice after the fight. When peace followed war, he craved the excitement of the great Greek games, the emotions of the almost impossibly beautiful in art, the heart-beating of the reckless player throwing for high stakes, the physical intoxication of wine, and the intellectual intoxication of the theatre; and when these palled he lost patience with peace and became the most gratuitously quarrelsome of human beings, taking offence at the hue of his neighbour's cloak, attacking a friend for an imaginary slight upon the least of his innumerable vanities, and making war about nothing, with the fine conviction of a thoroughly ill-tempered child that smashes its new doll to atoms rather than be good for five minutes. There is often something rudimentary and childlike in very gifted men; a lack of patience that makes the long way of thought intolerably irksome and drives the man of genius to the accomplishment of the apparently impossible by the shortest road.

As the Greek was individually, so were the Greeks in a body, wherever they established themselves, in the fertile plains and undulating hills of Asia Minor, in the wild mountains and isolated valleys of their own Greece, and in that greater Hellas with which this story has been concerned. They were always at odds with each other, and they rarely fought a foreign foe without seeing the faces of their born countrymen in the ranks that opposed them; they were alike incapable of submitting without a murmur to the rule of a single master, and of governing themselves as one whole by the orderly judgment of the many. Wherever they appeared they excited admiration and they often inspired terror; wherever they dwelt, even for a brief term of years, they left behind them works of lasting beauty; but whereas, as artists, as poets, and as philosophers, they created a standard that has made rivalry impossible and imitation ridiculous, their government has left no trace in the lands they once inhabited, and their laws have had less influence upon the subsequent law-givers of mankind than those of the Chinese or the Aztecs. In their arts and in their literature they worked for all time; in their government they were opportunists and intriguers, when they were not visionaries, and the type of their race having disappeared from the world, the conditions under which it lived are beyond the comprehension of

other civilized peoples. 'These Greeks,' said the Roman, 'can do everything to perfection, yet they are the barbers and we are the prætors.' The slight foundation of truth contained in the paradox explains the failure of the Greek race to reach that height of domination to which many other races have attained. When we see what they did for themselves we cannot but wish that they might have obtained the power to do as much for others, that they might have outnumbered and outfought the Romans, spreading over Italy, over Europe, over Asia, and Africa as the Romans did. The vast monuments of Rome would have been as perfect in beauty as they are stupendous in dimensions; four-fifths or nine-tenths of the best Greek literature would not have perished utterly, or have been preserved in miserable fragments; and the enlightenment of an Augustan age might not, perhaps, have been closely followed by the brutal horrors of a Nero's reign.

But these are idle dreams. The Greeks filled the south with their monuments and overspread it with their civilization during more than four centuries, and when the end of their story came they were no nearer to extinction as a people than the Poles were when their kingdom was divided among the nations of Europe. They simply ceased to have any political existence and became, with all they had, with their resources undiminished, their wealth unspent, their energies still all



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alive within them, the possession, body and soul, of a race that had mastered the only art they could never learn, the art of governing men; and thereafter, recognizing once and for always their position as a part of their conquerors' property, they worked for him and for Roman money as they had once laboured for glory and for themselves; and in the slow decadence of genius in captivity, their supreme gifts were weakened by degrees, then scattered, and then lost. Henceforth the history of the south becomes for more than half a thousand years the story of the Romans, from the days of Appius Claudius who took Messina till after the times of Christian Constantine.

The Romans

THE first Punic war, which was brought on by the appeal of the Mamertines to Rome, and lasted twenty-two years, was the turning-point in Roman history and the beginning of Rome's empire. The first Punic war means the conquest of Sicily, and since Rome held Messina and was in alliance with Syracuse, the struggle took place chiefly in the western and southern part of the island. It is no easy matter to sketch briefly a contest in which the winner lost seven hundred ships and an untold number of men; it is impossible to condense into a few pages anything more than the shortest possible account of the principal battles fought, and this

I shall endeavour to do with as much clearness as the difficult nature of the subject admits, henceforth calling places by their Latin names or by their modern ones.

The war opened slowly. For more than two hundred years Rome and Carthage had maintained towards one another an attitude of distrust without hostility, and when the two great powers were at last in open opposition for the possession of Sicily, they fenced and manœuvred for some time, as if testing their relative strength. Rome took Messina at the start, and having got the valuable alliance of Hiero, proceeded to subjugate the centre of Sicily, west of the little Syracusan kingdom. Carthage held Agrigentum as an outpost on the southern coast, Panormus was the centre of her strength, and the strong position she maintained at Lilybæum was her base of supplies from Africa. In the smaller cities inland which were under her control there were few Carthaginians.

The Romans proceeded to attack Agrigentum, and during a siege that lasted seven months, in the year 262 B.C., they would have been themselves cut off and starved, but for the timely supplies sent them by Hiero. The siege ended with a great battle in the hollow land west of the city and above Porto Empedocle. After long and stubborn fighting, the Romans succeeded in terrifying the enemy's elephants, as in the battle against Pyrrhus at Beneventum, and the whole Carthaginian army was soon in confusion, and was mercilessly cut to

pieces. In the night that followed, the remainder of the Carthaginians crept out of the city, crossed the besieger's trenches by filling a short extent of them with sacks stuffed with husks, and succeeded in escaping.

ON THE ROAD AT GIRGENTI, FORMERLY AGRIGENTUM

In the morning the Romans occupied and plundered the city without destroying it, as it was a valuable position. They sold twenty-five thousand of the inhabitants as slaves, and in that connexion it may be noticed that the vast number of captives who suffered this fate in

successive wars formed, in time, that race of slaves which long afterwards rose in power against Rome.

Carthage might now have proposed a peace which the Romans would have accepted, had she not been the greatest sea power of the age. She preferred to continue the struggle, and Rome understood at once that without a fleet it would be impossible to get possession of western Sicily and hold it. During the year 261 B.C., the Romans accordingly equipped a number of ships, no less than a hundred and twenty, and put to sea. The first aim of the expedition was to seize Lipari, in order to have a naval station in the neighbourhood of Panormus. The squadron of seventeen Roman vessels engaged in this undertaking surrendered to the Carthaginian fleet without striking a blow, but soon afterwards an engagement took place on the Sicilian coast in which Carthage lost a larger number. From first to last, and in spite of her great inferiority in shipbuilding and seamanship, Rome only lost one naval battle during the whole war, at Drepanum. After the first engagement, the Romans were quick to see that their enemies were superior in skill and rapidity, and they retorted by fitting all their own vessels with strong grappling irons, an invention which turned every naval engagement into a hand-to-hand fight, in which the Romans were generally sure of success. The first time these were used was in the same year, at Milazzo, under Caius Duilius, who took or destroyed fifty Carthaginian vessels, of

which the beaks were taken to Rome and set up as a trophy on the famous 'columna rostrata' in the Forum; and it was decreed that ever afterwards, when Duilius went home from any feast by night, he should be accompanied by torch-bearers and musicians.

The Romans fought with varying fortune on the island, while their fleet attacked Sardinia; and there one of the many Carthaginian generals who bore the name of Hannibal met them and was defeated, and suffered for his defeat on the cross. But in Sicily the Carthaginians strengthened themselves by fortifying the 'sickle' of Drepanum, and Trapani, and bringing down thither a number of the inhabitants of Mount Eryx; and Drepanum and Lilybæum each defended the other, so that the difficulty of seizing either was very great. These things occupied two years. Then at last the Romans made their first attack upon Panormus, but could not take it, and their army marched up inland and besieged a strong place called Mytistratum, on one side of which was an ascent so steep that it was almost a cliff, and seemed to need no defence. But when the siege did not advance, a devoted man, M. Calpurnius Flamma, climbed the rugged approach with four hundred men, all sworn to die, in order that while they drew the defenders to that side, the Romans might take the place by the other; and so it happened, and they all died like men, and the Romans won the town.

At this time the only real base of operations upon which the Romans could rely was Agrigentum, and the necessity impressed itself more and more upon them of getting possession of the great seaports in the west, an object which could only be attained by means of a powerful fleet. This they did not as yet possess, though they obtained a naval advantage in 257 B.C., when they sank or captured eighteen Carthaginian ships off Lipari. They had, however, an ample number of transports, and since the Carthaginians continually made forays upon the Italian coast, it seemed practicable to retaliate by sending an army to Africa. To this end great preparations were made, and in the year 256 B.C., three hundred and thirty Roman ships, many of which must have been very lately built, set sail for Africa with a hundred and forty thousand men. This great expedition was met by an even larger Carthaginian force near the headland of Ecnomus, now Licata, on the south coast of Sicily. As they came in sight of each other, the two fleets formed in line of battle: the Carthaginians divided their vessels into three squadrons, which appear to have moved forward simultaneously; the Romans advanced in an entirely different order, which was then quite new in naval tactics, the attack being led by the two Roman admirals, whose squadrons followed them in more and more extended order, so that the admirals' ships united to form the point of a wedge, behind which another squadron brought up the transports, while a fourth pro-

tected the rear. The plan of the Carthaginians was to let their centre give way before the Roman wedge, which was then to be caught and destroyed by the Carthaginian wings. The result was disastrous to the Carthaginian fleet; the Roman centre was completely victorious at the first onslaught, and when attacked by the Carthaginian wings, the latter were crushed by the Romans' second squadron. Carthage lost in this engagement ninety-four ships, and made overtures for peace, which were refused, however, and the Romans sailed on unhindered to Africa.

This was the celebrated expedition under Regulus, which, after many signal successes, was destined to total defeat in the year 255 B.C. The whole Roman force, excepting two thousand men, was destroyed, and when Rome sent another fleet to rescue the remnant, it also perished in a storm upon the Sicilian coast, between Camarina and Pachynus. Taking quick advantage of her enemy's disaster, Carthage now recaptured Agrigentum and several other points of minor importance. Defeat and disaster, instead of disheartening the Romans, roused them to enormous efforts, and in the incredibly short space of three months two hundred and twenty new ships were built and sent to sea.

In 254 B.C. the Romans took Drepanum, but failed to hold it long, and at once turned their whole strength against Panormus, which they blockaded by land and sea. At that time the harbour occupied a part of the

present city, the sea running much further inland than it now does, so that the neck connecting the height now called Monte Pellegrino with the land was far narrower than at present. While the Romans beleaguered the city, the Carthaginian general held the promontory and the isthmus, and was supported by his fleet, which was able to approach the neck from the other side. The Romans made no serious effort to dislodge him but turned their whole attention to the city, which they before long starved to surrender. They now controlled the three best harbours of the island, for Panormus and Messina were theirs, while their alliance with Hiero placed Syracuse at their disposal. Nevertheless, Carthage still held Monte Pellegrino with a small force, and apparently unmolested. In 253 B.C., after a second attempt upon Africa, the Romans lost another large fleet in a storm. After this, they for a time made no further effort to establish their superiority by sea, but in the following year, with only sixty transports, which could not be classed as war-ships, they seized and held the long-coveted island of Lipari.

The turning-point of the first Punic war came in the following year, when the Romans defeated the whole Carthaginian force in a great battle before Panormus. The Carthaginians on Monte Pellegrino had received large reënforcements from Africa, and at last attempted to recapture the city. The Romans awaited their approach under the walls and only

sent out a small detachment to harass the enemy's flank. When the Carthaginian elephants were at close quarters, the Romans adopted their usual tactics, maddening the beasts with darts and arrows until the whole line was thrown into confusion. The main body of the Roman army, which had been standing under arms, then charged, and the victory was immediate and complete. The elephants adorned the triumph of Metellus in Rome, and the Romans were now masters of the greater part of Sicily. The Carthaginians sued for peace, and hoping to obtain it on good terms sent Regulus, whom they had held four years a prisoner, to intercede for them in the Senate. They had misjudged the man. Instead of following their instructions, and fully aware of the fate that awaited him, he urged the Romans to grant no peace at any price. He spoke, he took leave of his family and of his friends, and he calmly returned to die a death of unimagined torture.

It now seemed certain that if Lilybæum could be taken, the war would be at an end, and in the following year, 250 B.C., a powerful fleet was sent out for that purpose. The Romans proceeded to a regular siege, which was destined to be long and tedious. By the most skilful seamanship, and thorough knowledge of wind and water, a Carthaginian leader entered the harbour of Lilybæum with fifty war-ships, in the face of the Roman fleet of two hundred sail, and having

supplied the city with provisions, sailed out again with the same success, and anchored further north in Drepanum, thus strengthening the already numerous fleet that occupied that port. Immediately afterwards, a certain Carthaginian seaman, surnamed the Rhodian, ran the blockade again and again with a single vessel, establishing a regular communication between Carthage and the beleaguered city. The superiority of the Carthaginian vessels was so great that before long the blockade became utterly derisory, and the Romans attempted to close the entrance of the harbour by a dam. Before it was half finished a first-rate Carthaginian ship ran aground upon the work. The Romans promptly captured it, and turning their prize to advantage soon caught the Rhodian blockade runner.

But they were not destined to immediate success, for before long a southwesterly gale, which must have blown with the force of a hurricane, wrecked their siege engines, which were promptly fired by the Lilybæians. The Romans now attempted to starve the city to submission, being themselves supplied with provisions by Hiero. In 249 B.C. a Roman army safely reached Lilybæum by land from the interior, and the general who now took command made an attempt upon Drepanum by sea; it ended in the only real defeat which the Romans suffered in any naval engagement during the war. The disaster was due to

the Roman ships being so crowded together that they could not use their grappling irons. In this year misfortune pursued the Romans, and they lost another large fleet during a gale on the south coast, while the Carthaginian squadron that was observing them succeeded in running under the lee to the eastward. The attempt upon Drepanum had failed, and the Roman losses were enormous, yet Eryx was taken and held, and the position is a commanding one. Once more the Romans retired temporarily from the sea, with the result that the enemy gained new courage to face them on land. At this time appears on the Carthaginian side a man of genius, Hamilcar, surnamed Barca, the 'lightning.' He once more seized Monte Pellegrino, which the Carthaginians had abandoned, and retrieving the ill-fortune of his predecessors he kept the Romans at bay during the greater part of six years. It was not until 243 B.C. that Rome called upon her citizens to build ships at their private expense, promising them full indemnity in case of ultimate success. The rich citizens responded magnificently to the call made upon them, and in 242 B.C. two hundred vessels, built on the model of the captured blockade runners, suddenly appeared before Lilybæum, to the great surprise of the enemy. In greatest haste, Carthage sent forth the last fleet she was able to raise, for her resources had been severely taxed, and she appears at that time to have been

grappling with difficulties at home. The engagement which followed, and which was fought about the islands off Drepanum, resulted in the most overwhelming defeat. Fifty Carthaginian ships were sunk, seventy were captured with all hands on board, and the victors sailed into the harbour of Lilybæum with no less than ten thousand prisoners.

The first Punic war was over, and the Romans remained in undisputed possession of Sicily, with the exception of the small kingdom they left to Hiero, their firm ally. Carthage was obliged, by the terms of the peace, to pay the sum of three thousand two hundred talents, equivalent to nearly eight hundred thousand pounds sterling, in the space of ten years; and besides Sicily, all the islands between Sicily and Italy were to be abandoned to the Romans. The latter interpreted the clause as including Sardinia, and took possession of it within a few years.

The south had peace. Wise in all his ways, Hiero returned as far as he could to the neutrality which he had always wished to preserve, and while he was forced to serve Rome and held his kingdom at her pleasure, he was careful to avoid giving offence to Carthage. He strengthened the friendships he had formed with Egypt and with Rhodes. When a fearful earthquake in the latter place destroyed a great part of the capital and overthrew the famous Colossus, he sent the Rhodians a hundred talents, which

are nearly twenty-five thousand pounds, in money, and many costly vessels for the temples, and engines for building, and he removed the export duties on corn sent from Syracuse to Rhodes. Moreover he set up two statues in the market-place there. Though Athenæus gives no date for the building of the great ship, the *Alexandrian* already described, it must have been constructed during the twenty-four years' peace which followed the first Punic war. Among the presents which Ptolemy sent to Hiero in return was the papyrus, which the latter planted on the banks of the river Anapus, and though it is extinct in Egypt, and is not found growing naturally in any other part of the world, the river banks are full of it to this day, for two or three miles, after more than two thousand years.

If Syracuse were not one of the most beautiful places in the world, that one sight should be enough to take many a scholar there to-day. The stream is deep and swift, and quite silent, running through the low land where so many thousands of brave men have perished. Clear as crystal it is, and ever cool, so that it is good to drink of it even in the dog days; and the papyrus grows as thick beside it as canes in the southern brake, nine and ten feet high, gracefully straight, but often drooping till the tufts of silky green wet their tiny gold-green blossoms in the gliding water; green from root to crown, the delicate stem, as thick as a man's

wrist at the ground, tapers finely to the plume that is a cloud of tangled curves. The stream is often barely ten feet wide, and nowhere more than twenty

PAPYRUS IN THE RIVER ANAPUS NEAR SYRACUSE

till it widens to a circle in the spring of Kyane, five fathoms deep, and clear as glass, the source of the lower branch. The shade is deep and soft, and from

the bottom the thick river grass reflects a darker green through the smooth surface. Shadowy dragon-flies, black, and amaranth, and light sky blue, dart in and out among the stems, or hover over the velvet-like weed that floats in the shade under the bank. It is a place where one feels that river gods and nymphs are alive forever in the truth of poetry, which is itself that fourth dimension in our understanding wherein all is possible, and all that is possible is beautiful, and all that has beauty is true.

On the desolate southeast coast of Malta, looking towards the molten enamel of the southern sea, white-hot under the pitiless sun, out of sight of humanity, there are certain ruins of Phœnician temples, the places of worship of Ashtaroth, or of Moloch, or of Baal. Huge slabs of rock, split off from the mountain, and neither carved nor plainly hewn, are thrust upright into the stony soil, side by side, for walls, in strange curves and rough half circles, like Druid stones, with great blocks set here and there upon uncouth pedestals, and masses of rock that figure nameless powers of nature; and there are small chambers, within which two persons can hardly stand, each having something like an altar, and each once closed by a door of stone to make a secret place. Under the blazing sky they are furnaces within furnaces, desolations within desolations, that were long ago abominable with the blood of human victims; and they reeked with the burning

of human flesh that sent up yellow smoke in the cloudless glare of noon, and the stones echoed a wild litany of shrieks, while the dark-faced priests looked gravely on and gathered back their white robes from the flames and brushed the sparks from their black beards. There are also a few places like these in Sicily, lonely and full of a horror, as though they were cursed.

That is what the Phœnicians left behind them in the lands that were theirs, the Phœnician Carthaginians, whose brazen god, set up in Carthage, grasped little children in his hot brass hands by a hideous machinery concealed within, and dropped them one by one into the raging fire; the god to whom believers sacrificed their first-born, the god to whom the boy Hannibal swore that he would hate the Romans while he lived.

One who leaves those hideous ruins behind him, and comes to Syracuse, may well feel that he has returned to a human world where he can breathe again, where he can linger on the steps of the vast theatre and almost hear the lovely strains of the Alcestis, the voice of Admetus, and the Chorus, and the cheerful laugh of Hercules, coming up from the wide stage; where he may muse away thoughtful hours in the enchanted gardens of the Latomie, recalling indeed how the unhappy Athenians languished and died there in fearful captivity, but remembering how many were set free because the magic of Greek verse

was familiar to their lips, and not forgetting the provocation, when friend and foe were of the same race,

AMPHITHEATRE AT SYRACUSE

and the grasping came against the peaceful; where he may float upon the silent stream in the papyrus shade, and read in a vision the verse and the philos-

ophy, the history and the wisdom, all written down age after age on the wafer-thin slips of fibre so skilfully fastened each to each in pages and scrolls, and yet all but a small part of what Greece left the world.

If Hiero could have made history, he would have made war impossible and peace beautiful. All he could do, he did, and while he lived he made a garden, a temple, and an academy of his small kingdom, and of Syracuse. Few years of absolute peace were given him — in all not a quarter of a century — for Rome was young, and Carthage was not beyond her great prime, and the two powers were like vast clouds in the intervals of a tempest, that lower and threaten each other from their mountain ranges, and are destined to meet in storm and lightning before the air can clear.

Being deprived of her island colonies and of her supremacy in the Mediterranean, Carthage turned in a new direction in order to retrieve her fortunes and replace her loss. Hamilcar Barca had not lost the confidence of his fellow-citizens; he had fought a brave fight and had withstood the growing force of Rome as long as it had been humanly possible. His country acknowledged his valour and received him with mourning, but not without honour. As soon as the injuries she had suffered during a war of twenty-two years' duration could be in part repaired, she intrusted him with a fleet and an army

wherewith to make new conquests. Hamilcar set forth and conquered the Spanish seacoast, colonizing as he went, and fighting his way on from the Greek settlements in the Gulf of Lyons down the coast and westward towards the Pillars of Hercules, the forerunner by a thousand years of the great Semitic invasion.

Years passed, and still he fought, and still he won new lands, till Carthage had a broad possession in Europe, whence it was possible, though not easy, to invade Italy from the north. Dying at last, Hamilcar left in his son a greater general and a more daring spirit than himself. For generations the great house of the Barcides had given leaders to the Carthaginian army; some had died the death of soldiers in the field, some had come home in glory and laden with spoil, and more than one had returned to expiate defeat upon the cross. Neither rank nor wealth nor a descent from heroes could protect the unfortunate from the wrath of a people whose altars ran with human blood, and who could throw their first-born to the flames as burnt sacrifices to Moloch. In Hannibal were concentrated at once the gifts of his own soldierly race and the spirit of the Carthaginian people. It was as if, for the final struggle now at hand, the whole nation had distilled its genius and its energies to their essence in one man. From the day when he set forth, at the age

of twenty-six years, till the final destruction of his army at Zama, Hannibal was the soul and life of his country; to his enemies his name meant all that Carthage was; to his countrymen it stood for all they hoped and looked to win in future years.

Hiero was in extreme old age when the war broke out again. We may fairly suppose with Holm that his diplomatic spirit was not altogether displeased by the news. Before all things he was a Syracusan and a patriot, and while he loved peace and used it for his country's good, as few have done, he must have looked with apprehension upon the vast predominance of Rome. On the other hand, his son Gelon, while devotedly attached to his father, differed with him altogether in his views of the situation, and would gladly have gone over to the Carthaginian side. But Hiero, though he probably wished that Rome might be held in check by an adversary of nearly equal strength, lest Syracuse should lose its independence altogether, was wise enough to see that Rome meant civilization, of a kind, whereas Carthage carried with her everywhere a strange mixture of commercial methods which were altogether selfish and injurious to others, and of religious institutions which were as terrible as they were barbarous. The king's old age must have been embittered by his foreknowledge of what was sure to happen after his death, and he appears to have done all in his power

to give stability to the position he had given his kingdom. He could not be wholly neutral, any more than he could be at heart wholly pleased by Rome's success.

In the year 219 B.C. Hannibal set forth. The little Greek colony of Saguntum, now Murviedro, on the Spanish coast, had allied itself with the Romans, and Hannibal's first aggressive act was to take it by siege, which was of course a violation of the peace of 242 B.C. Rome at once sent an embassy to Carthage to demand satisfaction; the spokesman gathered his cloak in his hands like a sack and held it up to the assembled council, saying, that he brought peace or war, as those who heard him might choose. They answered that the choice should be his, not theirs. He shook out the folds of his cloak before them and bade them take war, since they would have him choose, — war only, war at once, and war to the death.

It is not within the province of the story of the south to tell how Hannibal crossed the Pyrenees and marched along the southern coast of France, nor how he effected the passage of the Rhone, and lost more than half his army before he reached the Italian side of the Alps. Once in Italy, the natives of the north joined him without hesitation, and he drove the Romans southwards step by step, defeating them again and again from the river Ticinus down to southern Cannæ. While he made his famous

triumphal progress overland, the Romans still held Sicily and the islands, and it is amazing that while suffering such defeats on the one hand they should have been able to drive a Carthaginian fleet from the Sicilian shore on the other. But Hiero had received notice that the attempt was to be made, and every headland of the west was guarded, while the small Roman fleet that was in Lilybæum was provisioned for ten days and held in readiness to sail at any moment. On a fair moonlight night the Carthaginian ships stood in towards the shore, but their white sails betrayed them; from cape to cape the beacon signals shot up their flames, and in an hour the Roman fleet was under way. When day broke the battle began, and the Carthaginians were driven to flight, after losing seven of their vessels. Before the news of the victory had travelled far, a Roman consul arrived in Messina on his way to the rescue and was met by old King Hiero, with all his ships of war and with every expression of gladness and promise of help. He was anxious to impress upon the Romans from the first that he meant to stand by them as he had done long ago. But when it was known that Lilybæum was already safe, the consul sailed across southward and fell upon Malta, where he captured a Carthaginian force of two thousand men, whom he immediately sold as slaves in Sicily. It had been the first intention of Rome that he should attack Carthage from

Lilybæum; but Hannibal had by this time crossed the Alps, and the consul was ordered to sail round the east coast of Italy as far as Ariminum, now Rimini, to land there and march against Hannibal's troops. Even in the next year, 217 B.C., when Rome was losing the disastrous battle of Thrasimene and was forced to elect a dictator, a hundred and twenty ships were sent to harry the African coast. Hiero did more to help the Romans in the second Punic war than is commonly remembered. In the same year he sent five hundred Cretans and a thousand light-armed infantry, and in 216 B.C. a Syracusan fleet arrived at Ostia with ambassadors, and seventy-five thousand bushels of wheat, fifty thousand of barley, a thousand slingers and archers, and a golden statue of Victory weighing three hundred and twenty pounds. But the present was not of good augury, for on the second day of August, in the same year, the Roman general Varro lost seventy thousand men in the almost incredible defeat at Cannæ, far to southward in Apulia, where the swift and shallow river Aufidus, the Ofanto of our times, sweeps through the Pezza di Sangue, which is the 'field of blood' to this day, and where the rivulet still flows which Hannibal crossed on a causeway of corpses.

Then a Carthaginian fleet sailed up and ravaged the coast of Hiero's dominion, and he appealed for help in vain, for the Carthaginian ships were also threatening

Lilybæum in the west; but Rome could do nothing, neither for him nor for her own prætor in Sicily, and at the last it was Hiero, the ever willing, who sent help instead of receiving it. But his days were numbered. His son Gelon died very suddenly, and he himself not long afterwards, in the year 215 B.C., a very old man, deeply mourned by his people.

While Rome was slowly gathering strength after her cruel loss, and while Hannibal idled away golden hours in the soft Capuan plain, Hiero's grandson, Hieronymus, a spoiled boy of fifteen years, began to reign in Syracuse, at first under the guidance of fifteen guardians whom Hiero had appointed in his will, but soon alone, through the intrigues of court favourites who hoped to attain their ends by declaring him of age. Soon the boy began to array himself in purple and to wear a crown, and went about with a life-guard in the true tyrant fashion, and his boyish displeasure turned suddenly to cruelty at the least provocation. So the courtiers conspired to kill him, but he was warned of his danger, and tortured one of the courtiers to betray the rest; who, being very strong and very cunning, bore much before he would speak, and then accused the only loyal man in the palace, who was not in the conspiracy and was promptly put to death, for he was staunch to the Romans, and the king hated him.

This being done, Hieronymus turned to the Carthaginians and offered his alliance, promising that he would

help them to conquer Italy, if they would promise him all Sicily in return for his help; and Carthage agreed to this, as she would have agreed to any terms, without the least intention of carrying them out. So Hieronymus began to make war upon the Roman possessions in Sicily, not dreaming that the real conspirators were his advisors, who had sworn to make Sicily once more a republic; and the revolution broke out at Leontini. There, as the king rode through a narrow street towards the market-place, he was treacherously separated from his life-guards by one of themselves, and the conspirators fell upon him and slew him. But when they had done the deed, some proclaimed the republic and others took the crown and the blood-stained mantle from the boy king's dead body, and galloped to Syracuse, and rode through the quarter of Tyche and through Achradina, showing these things to the people, who rejoiced greatly. And the people went up to the temple of the Olympieum and armed themselves with all the splendid weapons, both Gallic and Illyrian, which the Romans had sent as presents to King Hiero, praying the Olympian Zeus to bless their swords, that they might fight for their freedom, their country, and their gods. On that same day they got possession of a part of the island of Ortygia, and on the next morning they summoned the governor, who was the young king's uncle by marriage, to surrender and acknowledge the republic, and he agreed.

On the day after that, he solemnly gave up to the people the keys of the palace and of the treasure house, and the people chose generals as of old, most of whom had been among the conspirators; but the governor himself received as many votes as any of the rest. He therefore planned to make himself master, but was betrayed, and the generals murdered him without delay. Then suddenly the city was in confusion, for he had been popular because he had spoken well and had given up the keys at once; and they called upon the man who betrayed him to tell all he knew. But this fellow accused Harmonia, the sister of the dead king, and another false witness appeared and accused all the women of the royal house; and the people rose tumultuously to slay them. Two were murdered at once, but the third, who was Heraclea, fled with several young daughters into the little temple of the palace; and first she begged for her life, but seeing that she was to die, she piteously pled for her daughters. They slew her by the altar, but the maidens were swift of foot and ran from the murderers for their lives, and wounded they still fled on, through the courts of the palace, shrieking, till at last the people hunted them to corners, one after the other, as dogs hunt weak and wounded animals, and they died.

After this, the people chose new generals, and the mercenary soldiers who were there forced them to choose two Carthaginian officers; yet suddenly the old attachment to Rome made itself felt, and messages

were sent to the Roman general in Sicily, to undo what Hieronymus had done and ask a renewal of the alliance. But Rome had already seen that although Hannibal could not conquer alone, he might be victorious with the help of Syracuse; and while the people hesitated and quarrelled among themselves, a Roman fleet of a hundred sail was already in sight off Megara, which is Agosta, under one of Rome's greatest generals, Marcus Claudius Marcellus. He was of that great Claudian house that gave Rome more soldiers of genius than any other, and from which sprang all the Claudian Cæsars; he had fought in the first Punic war, and in Gaul he had slain with his own hand Vindomar the king, and had brought home the spoils to the temple of Jupiter Feretrius, a feat accomplished three times only, — by Romulus, by Aulus Cornelius Cossus, and by himself.

But no sooner was Marcellus in sight than the Carthaginian fleet appeared from the opposite direction, and as the rival forces faced each other on the sea, so within Syracuse the opposite factions quarrelled, manœuvred, intrigued, and betrayed each other. The Carthaginian officers who had been elected generals whispered that there was a plot to betray the city to the Romans; but as the people armed themselves to go and defend the walls, a man who had their respect rose up and spoke to them, and convinced them that whereas their alliance with one party or

the other was a matter of choice, there could be no doubt as to which friendship had proved to be of the most value in the past, since the city had been far more prosperous under Hiero than under his grandson, Hieronymus. The people were inclined to accept this view, and agreed to a peace with Rome, which was immediately broken when one of the generals, being sent with four thousand men to strengthen the garrison of Leontini, crossed the border into the Roman possessions on his own responsibility, and proceeded to plunder the country. The Romans now defended themselves and demanded satisfaction of Syracuse, but the Syracusans answered them, saying that they could not hold themselves responsible for what was done in Leontini. By way of retort Marcellus immediately took that city, which had indeed declared itself independent of Syracuse. In the capital the disturbances continued, and while the Romans endeavoured to bring the government to reason, it became more and more evident that there was indeed no government at all with which to treat. Marcellus sent ambassadors at last to the gate with his ultimatum, but they were not admitted, and received a scornful message from the walls. They might come back, they were told, when those who sent them were masters of Syracuse.

Once more Syracuse was besieged. By sea, Marcellus blockaded the port and attacked the sea wall of Achradina with strange engines, built up from the

decks of his war-ships, with ladders and stages by which he hoped to scale the ramparts. The low cliff along which the wall was built is nowhere less than thirty feet in height to-day; the wall above it could scarcely have been less than fifteen or twenty feet high, and was probably more. In many places the cliffs are 'steep to,' as seamen say, and it was easy enough to bring the vessels, bows on, to the rocks; it was another matter to set up ladders four feet wide, hoisted by tackles from the mastheads, and having at the top a platform on which four men could stand. The situation of these four soldiers cannot have been an enviable one at the best, yet the undertaking might have succeeded but for the superior skill of the aged Archimedes, who had outlived Hiero's kingdom, and the revolutions that had followed its fall, and whose marvellous activity and powers of invention kept the Romans at bay for many months. As their ladders moved up below the walls, and the soldiers began to climb up from the decks, vast wooden arms suddenly stretched out from the ramparts, dropped huge blocks of stone or weights of lead upon the besiegers with unerring skill, and immediately disappeared again, while not a defender was to be seen. Archimedes invented the sort of loop-hole generally known by its French name 'meurtrière,' and which, being but a narrow slit on the outer side, widens rapidly within, so that a man may shoot through it in almost any

direction, at his ease. It soon became evident that the city could not be taken from that side.

By land Appius Claudius had no better success. Archimedes invented a sort of automatic iron hook which became the terror of the Romans, for it could pick up the besiegers from the ground below the walls and hurl them down again by means of machinery worked from within. Moreover, the ascent to the ramparts on the north side was steep, and it was easy to throw down masses of stone and other missiles upon those who attacked. Both generals, after having hoped to take the city in a few days, were obliged to content themselves with the old-fashioned plan of starving it out by a blockade. Meanwhile, the Carthaginians seized Agrigentum, and one of the Carthaginian officers in Syracuse succeeded in crossing the Roman lines with a considerable force, in order to join the allies, but was checked by Marcellus. Nevertheless, the Carthaginian forces encamped within eight miles of Syracuse, while a fleet of fifty-five vessels entered the great harbour.

The struggle began to assume greater dimensions. While Hannibal was still lingering in Capua, Rome sent the first legion to Panormus, to join and strengthen Marcellus. A Roman legion consisted at that time of four thousand two hundred men. The Carthaginians fancied it would be an easy matter to destroy so small a force, and marched to meet it, following

the coast to Messina, and Cape Pelorus; but by a rapid movement Appius Claudius was there before them, and fearing to give battle they retired into the interior, with the intention of seizing as many of the Roman cities as possible. A number of these cities were indeed inclined to sympathize with the Carthaginians. Morgantia gave the example by opening her gates to Rome's enemies. Henna, now Castrogiovanni, the highest inhabited point of Sicily, and perhaps the most inaccessible after Eryx, would have done the same; for the inhabitants pressed the Roman commander, who had but a small force, to surrender at once. He professed himself willing to hear the arguments of the assembled people, and bade them meet him in the theatre on the following day. They did so; he surrounded the place with his little garrison, and with an energy as ruthless as it was prompt, he massacred the greater part of the inhabitants on the spot. These things took place according to Livy in 214 B.C., but Holm places the massacre at Henna in the following year.

The condition of things which had characterized more than one previous siege of Syracuse was now renewed. The besiegers were unable to make the blockade effective, and the city was constantly supplied with provisions from without. Within, the defenders were divided into parties. Both in the city and in the Roman camp the tedious length of the

struggle produced a certain indifference and carelessness. The Romans attempted to set on foot a conspiracy among the Syracusans by which they should be admitted treacherously. It was betrayed, and the leaders were put to death. A singular accident or chance brought about the final result. The question of releasing to the Syracusans an important prisoner led to a parley which took place near the walls, not far from the little harbour of Trogilus. During the conversation, which lasted some time, one of the Romans who was not concerned in it amused himself by counting the courses of stone in the wall of the city where it was lowest, owing to some irregularity of the ground. A mental calculation of the possible height of each course led him to the conclusion that the rampart could be reached with fairly long scaling ladders at that place. It chanced that the feast of Artemis was at hand, which would last three days, during which it was a foregone conclusion that the greater part of the garrison would be either feasting or sleeping off the effects of wine. A thousand picked men were sent to the spot indicated, after midnight, and they got over the wall without difficulty, opened one of the smaller gates, and admitted a large number of Romans. At daybreak Marcellus was master of Epipolæ, and standing upon the height gazed down for the first time upon the vast and beautiful city that lay at his feet; and it is told that

his eyes were filled with tears, though he was an old soldier, both for joy over the great deed he had done, and for sadness over the ancient glory of the city. For he thought of the two Athenian fleets that had been sunk by Syracusans, and of the two mighty armies, led by two famous generals, who had perished there, and of the many wars waged with the Carthaginians, and of the great tyrants and kings who had ruled, and more than all of Hiero, almost the last of them, who had been so staunch a friend to the Roman people; and as he thought on all these things, he already saw in his imagination the most beautiful city of his time in flames, plundered, reduced to ashes, levelled with the ground. But he yet hoped to avert such fate of war, and he sent certain Syracusans who were in his camp to parley with the city and advise a surrender.

The fall of Syracuse is a confused story of plot and counterplot, of betrayal, and all possible treachery. The beleaguered city took courage at first, when Carthaginian troops appeared before the walls, and it seemed as if the Romans were themselves to be besieged; beaten in each attack, the allies hoped great things from a Carthaginian fleet of many hundred sail that reached Pachynus, now Capo Passero, and lay under the land for shelter during a storm, but as soon as the weather moderated the ships sailed on to Italy. The situation grew desperate; the malarious fever raged

in both armies, but made the more victims among the Carthaginians, who were encamped in lower land. Marcellus had already been obliged to burn the quarters of Tyche and Neapolis in order to destroy the shelter they might have given the enemy in case of an attack, and he held Epipolæ; so that of the five quarters, which, as Livy says, were cities in themselves, only Achradina and Ortygia still held out. They parleyed, and their citizens plotted; new generals were elected, and one was a Spaniard, Mericus, a friend to the Romans; he admitted them to Ortygia treacherously, by night, giving up the portion of the wall intrusted to him. Then Achradina yielded; and at first the Roman soldiery could not be controlled, though they were bidden to plunder without slaughtering the people. Archimedes perished, and many others, but Marcellus buried the great engineer with honour and ceremony, and to this day imaginative persons point out a tomb which they call his, but which is not, for Cicero has described the real one most minutely, and how he found it overgrown with brambles, but knew it by the sphere and cylinder, and by the half of the inscription that remained, and of which he possessed a complete copy.

Syracuse fell in the autumn of 212 B.C., two hundred and three years after the first landing of the Athenian expedition; the whole Syracusan territory was annexed to the Roman dominions, and the capital became a

mere provincial city. Yet the war was not over, and though Marcellus took back to Rome as much spoil as Carthage herself could have yielded, he was not allowed a triumph, but only an "ovation," because he was obliged to leave his army behind him. In the procession, amid many objects of beauty, there was carried a painted picture of Syracuse; before the rest went the two men who had betrayed the city, and who were rewarded with the Roman citizenship and rich gifts of land and houses; and eight elephants walked in the procession to testify to the victory over the Carthaginians.

As for Agrigentum, which had served the enemy as a base of operations since the beginning of the war, it was not taken till 210 B.C., and it might have held out longer if it had not been betrayed to the Romans by a discontented general, a Numidian, whom the Carthaginian commander had removed from office. He admitted the Romans by the sea gate. The citizens who had favoured Carthage were beheaded, the rest were all sold as slaves.

So far as Sicily was concerned, the second Punic war was over, though eight years elapsed before the struggle closed at Zama, in Africa, with the total destruction of Hannibal's army.

It has been justly said that the character of the Romans became much more cruel after this period, that they visited the former defection of the cities on the

mainland with merciless severity, and ruled Sicily with unrelenting hands. With the extension of Roman territory, the conquest of Spain, the universal naval supe-

A LONELY SPOT ON THE SHORE OF EASTERN CALABRIA

riority acquired at such fearful cost, came a state of things in which the importance of states once independent was reduced to the smallest proportions, and their wealth was drained to feed Rome's enormous hunger.

The Sicilians complained, many Syracusans came to Rome to make representations to the Senate; they compared Marcellus to the destroying fires of Etna and to the terrors of the Straits, of Scylla, Charybdis, and the tidal currents; they not only accused him, they calumniated him, and they told false tales of pretended readiness to deliver Syracuse to him, saying that he had wished to take their city by force, out of vanity, and had preferred to conquer it by the treachery of a coppersmith and a Spaniard, rather than to receive its willing submission, in order to slake his thirst for blood and satisfy his greed for booty, and that he had treated Leontini with unexampled cruelty at the very outset of the war; they concluded by demanding the restitution of their property, so far as any of it still existed. They had friends among the Romans, men who envied Marcellus his glory and hoped much for themselves, and who spoke against him in the Senate; but they obtained nothing, for Syracuse was in Rome's possession now; Rome had got it by the hand of her great general, and what she once held she kept. Failing in their mission, the subtle Greeks turned suddenly to flattery and fawning, and lest worse should befall them thereafter, they chose Marcellus to be their especial patron and protector.

In order to understand what followed, — the condition of the south after its final conquest by Rome, the wars of the insurgent slaves, and the misfortunes to which

Sicily was subjected under the prætorship of Verres, — it is necessary to have at least a superficial idea of the machinery by which Rome governed her first province, as well as those which she subsequently acquired. The principle of this government was of the simplest description, for it consisted in placing the whole power in the hands of a trusted servant of the state, who could be held accountable for his acts only to the Roman Senate, and who possessed in his province the powers of a consul, which he could practically extend to the omnipotence of a dictator. This official, after the system assumed its permanent form, was in fact a man who had served his year as prætor in the city, and then obtained the office denominated proprætor of a province by lot. The term of this service was supposed to be a year, but it could be prolonged by the Senate, and during its duration he who obtained it was commander-in-chief of all the troops in the province, with powers of life and death over all persons residing there, whether Roman citizens or not. He combined in his own person a number of offices which in Rome were held by separate individuals, he was the supreme judge, and was superior to all courts. The home government indeed limited his actions in certain ways. He was required to abstain rigorously from all transactions which could affect his personal interests; he was forbidden to buy slaves in his province, excepting to replace such as died in

service; he was not to engage in any financial operations on his own account; and finally, he was neither allowed to marry a woman of the province nor to take his own wife with him. It will be seen that everything was interdicted to him which could be supposed to influence his judgment in any way. As in the United States at the present time, it was intended that the constant replacing of one official by another should make impossible that corruption which is often the result of leaving the same person to exercise the same function in the same place for many years together. As for his pay and allowances, the former was considerable and, according to Cicero's reckoning, may be estimated at more than sixty thousand pounds sterling of modern money, of which the purchasing power was then at least two and a half times as great as it is now. The allowances consisted in a sum of public money for his original outfit, in a residence which the province was bound to provide for him, and in free entertainment for himself and his large retinue during all his official journeys. It is unnecessary to speak of his subordinates in detail. The second person in the province was the quæstor or treasurer, who presided over the collection of revenue and the provincial budget, and who was supposed to be co-responsible with the prætor for the manner in which the public money was expended. The prætor in office was surrounded by a court of

considerable state. Three distinguished citizens, termed Legates of the Roman people, were named by the Senate to accompany him, and to them he could delegate his civil authority, but not the power of life and death. He had of course a military guard, and he was allowed to choose at his pleasure a number of young men of rank who were commonly called his prætorian cohort, and who under his direction fitted themselves for a political career. Besides these he had a small army of scribes and clerks and other assistants, designated collectively his apparitors; he also had six lictors and a staff of heralds, physicians, augurs, and interpreters.

After the Punic wars a considerable number of Roman citizens resided in Sicily and occupied themselves in commerce, farming, and the lucrative business of undertaking government contracts. In the case of a bad prætor, these citizens were as much at his mercy, in fact, as the mere provincials, but in theory they were protected by their right of appealing to the Roman people, a right not always derisory. It is remarkable, however, that in times of peace Sicily was governed without any outward show of power, without the presence of any large body of soldiery, without garrisoned towns as strongholds in case of insurrection, and was practically kept in subjection merely by the fear of Rome. Of modern nations England alone seems able to inspire a similar respect in some of her possessions.

The first care of the Romans, after the fall of Syracuse and before the overthrow of Carthage, was to develop in Sicily those great resources of agriculture by means of which Hiero had been able to render them such signal service, and the first prætors made constant journeys through the length and breadth of the island in order to assure themselves that the cultivation of corn and other cereals was conducted with energy and good judgment. It was from this time that Sicily began to be called the granary of Rome. Moreover, until the battle of Zama, the Romans must have felt that there was an element of insecurity, if not of instability, in their domination, against which it was necessary to guard themselves with the utmost foresight. They endeavoured also to strengthen themselves by recalling those Greeks who had fled during the long wars, and in 208 B.C., during the games of the one hundred and forty-third Olympiad, they caused an announcement to be made to the effect that if these exiles would return, their former possessions should be given back to them. It appears that the proposition was accepted.

Before the state of Sicily became finally settled, Scipio made it the base of his operations against Africa. It is somewhat hard to understand that Hannibal should have been able to remain in Italy, treating a part of the south as a conquered country, long after all Sicily was in the hands of the Romans,

and that Scipio should have had some difficulty in obtaining permission to make an expedition against Carthage; but the reader who desires an explanation of these facts can find it in any history. Hannibal might have found it at one time more difficult to retire from Italy than to remain where he was, and if there was still any uncertainty about the fate of the great island, it was to be decided in battles fought elsewhere. To the last, though little concerned in the fighting, Sicily was made to contribute the greatest part of the provisions necessary for the expedition. Before attempting it, Scipio collected from all the Sicilian coast merchant vessels for transports, and loaded them with cargoes of provisions. The fleet and army were provided with cooked food sufficient for a fortnight, and corn and other provisions for a month longer, and with fresh water for forty-five days. There were forty ships of war and four hundred transports collected to sail from the harbour of Lilybæum. The city and harbour were crowded to overflowing, for persons of all conditions had flocked thither from other parts of the island to see the departure of the fleet. Among the soldiers were many who had been in the great defeat of Cannæ, and who trusted that under Scipio's generalship they might redeem their reputation. Yet the utmost order was maintained throughout the preparations, and the most strict commands were issued with

a view to keeping the fleet together during the passage. The squadrons were to sail in a regular order by day and by night, and lights were to be carried to distinguish the classes of vessels from one another; one light for a war-ship, two for a transport, and three for the admiral's own vessel. When all was ready, at daybreak on the day of departure, silence was imposed upon the vast assembly by a herald, and Scipio, after sacrificing upon his own ship in the sight of all, addressed a solemn prayer for victory to the gods, and cast the remains of the victims into the sea. The trumpet sounded the final signal, and all the four hundred and forty vessels set sail with a fair wind.

This was in 202 B.C.; fifty-six years later the city of Carthage was finally destroyed, after a siege that lasted three years, during which the Romans built a stone wall across the harbour, and ultimately walled in the doomed city. Such resistance shows well enough that even the defeat at Zama had not destroyed the resources nor the vitality of the great Phœnician nation.

During the time which intervened between the two wars, the south was going through those slow changes which led to the wars of the revolted slaves, from the moral effect of which Sicily never altogether recovered, and which were the first beginning of a certain lawlessness among the country population which is felt at

the present day. I am not aware that any writer has taken this point of view, but it is a reasonable one, nevertheless. Reviewing the whole previous history of the island, it is clear that until the Roman conquest was completed, the Sicilians had never been united. Not only had the Phœnician element been in opposition and often at war with the Greek, but both had been, from time to time, at odds with the Sicelians, who, though hellenized like the Sicilian Phœnicians, preserved, like them, the prejudices and characteristics of a distinct race. Besides these there were the Mamertines, the descendants of a wild band of discharged mercenaries, who were responsible for the outbreak of the first Punic war, and who would not naturally live on good terms with the other three divisions of the population. All these were made one by force under the Roman domination, and the condition of a common subjection united all those who did not profit by it in that common hatred of authority which is the mainspring of the Mafia to-day. It is hardly necessary to say that the great majority of those who were oppressed were slaves, and that the numbers were constantly increasing at a time when the slave trade was immensely profitable. In Delos, the central slave market of the Ægean, ten thousand slaves were bought and sold in a single day. They were collected from all the shores of the Mediterranean, and often from far up the interior of Africa. Pirate vessels of all sorts

engaged in the business, as being easier under most circumstances than robbery on the high seas, besides being perfectly legal.

It seems impossible to form an estimate of the number of slaves owned in Sicily, still less in Italy, at any one time. Holm, who has collected information from every quarter and has probably left no source unexplored, says that there were Carthaginians who owned as many as twenty thousand slaves. A freedman of Augustus, whose property was reduced, left over four thousand at his death. The usual authorities state that two hundred were a fair number for an ordinary citizen. There were, of course, a good many small farmers in the interior of Sicily, who owned very few, and worked in the fields themselves; but the general tendency was towards extensive culture as contrasted with intensive culture, and towards those very large holdings which have continued to exist in the south to the present day. The Nelson property in Sicily, inherited by Lord Bridport, Duke of Brontë, is now eighty miles round, and there were doubtless even larger estates under the Romans, worked altogether by slaves, at a time when there were no free tenant farmers. It is safe, I think, to assume that, at the very least, two-thirds of the whole population were slaves at the time of the slave wars.

No one can suppose for a moment that any moral authority could control such a body of bondsmen,

many of whom were doubtless rough men of great strength and savage instincts, who feared nothing but pain and starvation, and respected nothing but the master's display of force. We do not know on what principle they were selected for different occupations, but it is certain that those who suffered most were ordinary farm labourers, who worked in irons under ruthless overseers, receiving a pound of barley or wheat daily, with a little oil and salt, for their fare, and being lodged in wretched quarters, often under ground. In Rome, only runaways were branded like thieves, on the principle that in trying to escape they were stealing themselves from their masters; but in Sicily all were branded alike with their owner's marks, like cattle. It is certain, however, that the slaves who herded cattle were mounted, and armed for the defence of herds and flocks, like the mounted herdsmen of the present time in the Roman Campagna; and to this day the southern herdsman invariably carries a small axe, a very dangerous weapon nearly of the size and model of an Indian tomahawk. It is a privilege peculiar to him, in a country where it is a punishable offence for a labourer to carry a pointed knife.

Holm argues acutely that the only possible way in which a slave could improve his condition was by turning highwayman. He had no other choice, since, being branded in the face, he could not possibly pass for a freeman anywhere in the known world at that time.

It is a singular fact that modern Sicilians of the lower classes, with whom I have talked long and familiarly, attribute the ineradicable tendency to brigandage to the oppression of the large landholders, saying in Holm's own words that when the peasant can no longer live he has no choice but to turn robber. This is of course not universally true, but it indicates a surprising duration of the same conditions under widely different institutions. Between the state of the slave in the Roman times and that of the legally oppressed small tenant of to-day there is not much to choose, in theory; in practice, there is the difference between the lash and the law.

Now in ancient Sicily a singular position of affairs was soon reached. Slaves ran away and formed bands of brigands, but they very naturally attacked the weak and almost defenceless small free farmers and left the rich and powerful unmolested. Many of the runaways were slaves of Roman knights, and the authorities let them alone, because if any one but the owner punished a slave, the owner could bring an action to recover damages for a personal injury. On the other hand, when the brigands had murdered a small farmer and plundered his land, they immediately disappeared into the mountains, and the nearest rich man found it convenient to appropriate the ownerless property; so that there may even have been an understanding between the great landlords and the brigands,

such as has been seen in Sicily in our own times, between the bandits and small landlords, for the purpose of plundering the rich.

IN CASTROGIOVANNI TO-DAY

The first outbreak of the first slave insurrection had its origin in Henna, now Castrogiovanni, which rises from the great valley of the interior like a volcano, opposite its twin height, Calascibetta. There, in a palace that was half a stronghold, dwelt a rich man called

Damophilus with his wife Megallis. Their great estates lay far below, cultivated by thousands of slaves, and in the city there were others perhaps as rich and powerful as themselves. These two, however, were known throughout the country for the splendour of the state they kept and the barbarous cruelty with which they treated their human chattels. They had one daughter, their only child, of a temper very different from theirs, for she was kind and gentle. Now among the slaves of another master in Henna there was one Eunus, a Syrian of some education and skilled in the tricks of Oriental magic. It is hard to judge of the man's character from the account Diodorus has left us. Among the many oppressed he was an enthusiast for liberty, where all were ignorant he possessed a little learning, where there was no hope he pointed to a far-off glimmer of freedom. To his companions he seemed half a god, to his masters he appeared to be a clever conjurer; he had learned the secret of eating fire and blowing it from his mouth, and among his fellow-slaves he enhanced the solemnity of his utterances by this means, and they listened with reverence and awe to prophecies that were accompanied by such a portent. The great men of Henna, when they feasted in company, used to send for him and make him exhibit his skill; and with an earnestness which amused them and convinced the slaves who were present in the hall, he used to prophesy amidst a shower of sparks that he

should one day be king. Then the guests laughed and jestingly implored that he would treat them graciously when he should come to his kingdom; and he answered with much dignity that he would show mercy to all present. So they, being well pleased, gave him choice titbits from the feast and bade him remember thereafter that they were his friends.

At this time, when he had attained to a great reputation, the suffering slaves of Damophilus and Megallis came to him secretly and inquired whether the gods would be gracious to them if they revolted. Eunus consulted the oracles of the future for them, and bade them revolt at once. In an incredibly short time four hundred slaves under the command of the fire-eating soothsayer set the whole city in an uproar; thousands of slaves joined them as soon as their intentions were understood, and before night the streets of Henna ran with the blood of the slave-owners, of their wives and of their children. For the rabble spared no living thing, and when Damophilus and his wife were found in one of their country houses, for the revolt had begun in their absence, a band of slaves brought them with their hands bound behind them into the city and led them to the theatre to be judged. The master died an easy death, for while he was eloquently pleading his own cause two of his own slaves sprang upon him with swords, and as the one stabbed him to the heart the other struck off his head at a blow. But the

lady Megallis was given over to her own female slaves, and they tortured her as she had tortured them and worse, and when there was little life left in her they threw her, still breathing, from the cliff. Her daughter was not hurt. These things being done to the full satisfaction of the multitude, the word of Eunus was fulfilled, for they elected him forthwith to be their king. His first royal act was to order a general massacre of slave-owners, and with his own hand he slew his own masters; but, strange to say, he kept his word to those who, when guests at their table, had treated him kindly. The only free men who were spared in Henna were the armourers, whose skill was needed in order to supply the insurgents with weapons, and who were now themselves made slaves. Eunus took the title of Antiochus, and in three days raised a nondescript force of six thousand men, armed chiefly with slings, axes, scythes, skewers, and pointed staves hardened in the fire.

It has already been said that the Roman power was maintained in the island more by the fear of Rome's name than by the presence of any military force. The Sicilian freemen had well-nigh forgotten the use of arms in the long peace, there were few troops in the island, and these were stationed at such places as Lilybæum, Panormus, and Messina. The Sicilians were taken by surprise, and before they could organize any means of defence the rising had assumed the

most dangerous proportions. A Cilician named Cleo, who had been a highway robber in his home, but was engaged in horse-breeding in Sicily, was attracted by

CALASCIBETTA AT SUNSET

the prospect of plunder, raised five thousand men as well disposed as himself, in the neighbourhood of Agrigentum, and proceeded to join forces with Eunus,

leaving a broad tract of destruction behind him as he went up the interior. The junction was effected before the prætor of the island was able to get together a force of eight thousand men. The slave army met him, twenty thousand strong, and he was defeated. Soon afterwards no less than two hundred thousand slaves were in arms.

The indifference of the great landholders to the safety of the small free farmers, whose little possessions they coveted, has been already explained. It had produced its natural result, and the free farmers soon saw that if they joined themselves to the insurgent slaves they could have ample revenge. They rose in great numbers, and the insurrection speedily became a general revolution of poverty against wealth. As often happens in such cases, this meant anarchy. The poor freemen of the city, wholly ignorant of the condition of the small farmers, whom the slaves regarded as their allies, plundered them wholesale, and the result was a sort of general and indiscriminate guerilla warfare.

It was evident that the Roman garrison of Sicily was totally unable to cope with the difficulty; moreover, slaves revolted at the same time in Greece and Macedonia and in other places; it was said that a slave conspiracy was on foot in Rome itself.

This state of things had already lasted the greater part of six years before the Romans succeeded in gaining a decided advantage. Publius Rupilius, the

consul in 132 B.C., who had begun life himself as a tax-gatherer in Sicily, finally quelled the first outbreak. He besieged the slaves in Tauromenium, and reduced them to such straits that they devoured their women and children, and at last began to eat each other. Their commander was a certain Comanus, a brother of Cleo, the horse-breeder. Slavelike, he abandoned his comrades and escaped from the city, but was taken and brought before the consul. Being asked questions about the state of the city, he bent down, drawing his cloak over his head as if to shade his eyes and collect his thoughts, and then, for he was a very strong man, he set his hand to his throat and crushed his windpipe in his own grip, so that he fell dead at the consul's feet. Soon afterwards the city was betrayed to the Romans by a Syrian, and the greater part of the slaves were hurled from the cliff. Last of all Cleo and Eunus retired to the impregnable city of Henna, where the outbreak had begun. Being almost starved to despair Cleo had the courage to attack the Romans in the open, but he was beaten and the city surrendered. Untold thousands of slaves were massacred, but Eunus escaped with less than a thousand men only to be hunted down by the Romans at last. His companions killed each other; but Eunus himself, his cook, his baker, his bath servant, and his jester, were taken alive by the Romans, and it is said that Eunus was condemned to be bitten to death by vermin in a dungeon. So ended the first slave war.

The wars of the slaves in Sicily were not isolated attempts to obtain freedom, to be referred to local causes only. Whether any understanding existed between the oppressed classes throughout Rome's dominions, to bring about a general revolution, it is impossible to determine. In times of insurrection and change, it often seems as if many movements were directed by one leader, when there is, in fact, no leader at all, but when the natural understanding in different parts of the world has been produced by the spreading of an idea which brings about similar results in similar conditions. The same thing happens in the domain of science. Newton, Leibnitz, and Descartes invented almost simultaneously, but in very different ways, the method which goes by the name of the Differential Calculus. Great minds reach similar conclusions in similar circumstances; the mind of a people may be considered to be a great mind made up of millions of units, almost all insignificant, if taken separately, but superlatively logical when acting as a whole. If this were not true, representative government would be nothing but the rule of ignorance or, at best, of mediocrity. But the instinct of a nation is almost always as unerringly logical as the instinct of a wild animal. It is not necessary to suppose that between the years 139 B.C. and 99 B.C. there was any general and secret understanding by which the slaves of the Romans agreed to rebel at the same time, from Asia Minor to

Sicily, while the Gracchi attempted to overthrow the aristocracy in Rome itself.

On the other hand, those who have lived in India and the far East know how fast news travels among the people in countries where there is either no telegraph at all, or where it is certainly not at the service of the agricultural population. I recollect that when Sir Louis Cavagnari was murdered in Kabul, in 1879, the news was told in the bazaar at Allahabad before the English authorities received it by the telegraph, which then covered more than half the whole distance between the two places. The conditions in the outlying parts of the Roman possessions were more like those of India than is generally realized, and it should not surprise any one to learn that news often travelled from point to point at the rate of several hundred miles a day. Such a possibility implies a much more rapid exchange of ideas than might at first be expected, and it must not be forgotten, in the case of the slaves, that they had relatives and friends in Asia, in Africa, and in Spain, from whom they had been forcibly carried off into servitude, and who must have used every means which affection could suggest for communicating with them. Merchants came and went in their ships, soldiers were ordered to different provinces, and back again, slaves themselves accompanied their Roman masters on long journeys, and took messages to the friends of their fellow-slaves, and brought back

news on their return. Thus there was constant communication between the oppressed classes from one end of the Roman dominions to the other, and a constant sympathy between them was maintained thereby, which could not fail to manifest itself sooner or later in more or less simultaneous action.

It seems credible, too, that something of the spirit of the Pythagorean brotherhoods may have survived, though the majority of the slaves probably never heard of the philosopher himself; and that they may have used signs and may have had peculiar customs by which they recognized each other. 'Thieves' slang' still serves thieves as a certain means of recognition, and every one who has lived in Sicily knows that the 'Mafiusi' use special names for a number of familiar objects and articles of daily use.

It is at all events certain that the movement of the slaves was very extensive throughout the Roman world, and that they displayed tactics which, though not of the highest order, imply the existence of organization. This was notably the case during the second slave war in Sicily. Before the first was over, and when Henna was still in the hands of the insurgents, an outbreak took place in Asia Minor which may be regarded as more or less accidental, for it was not begun by the slaves themselves. Attalus, king of Pergamus, had bequeathed his kingdom to the Roman people by will. His son, considering himself deeply wronged, attempted

to rouse the nobles to a revolution, and failing to do so, appealed to the slaves and the poor, promising them freedom and riches. He was, of course, conquered by the Romans. The insurrection of Vettius in Campania in 104 B.C. seems to have been more closely connected with the real slave movement. Vettius was a Roman knight of some wealth, living on his estates in the south. In an evil hour he was attracted by a beautiful slave girl, and what was at first the mere caprice of an idle country gentleman grew by degrees into one of those uncontrollable passions that breed in the feverish air of the south. The girl was faithfully devoted to her slave people, and dreamt of winning their liberty. Her lover might have given his own bondsmen freedom for her sake, but she wanted more than that, and she began to persuade him that the slaves of Italy would make him their king if he would lead them, and face the Romans if he would fight with them, and that the empire of the world was almost within his grasp. In the privacy of his Campanian villa, absolute lord of all he saw, Vettius listened to the lovely Greek girl day after day, and he watched the sturdy slaves going about their work, and he saw that they would make good soldiers, who would fight to the last breath for their liberty. Secluded from the world, everything seemed possible, and all that he heard by the voice he loved seemed sure, for there was no one to answer the woman. So he got together a great quantity of

arms and gave them to his slaves, bidding them free their fellows throughout Italy; and they made him their king. But he appointed one of them, a Greek called Apollonius, to be his general, and this dastard betrayed him to the Romans, and he slew himself rather than fall into their hands.

About the same time the Roman senate was actually taking steps to check the slave trade and to restore to liberty a number of persons then in slavery. It was decreed unlawful to make a slave of any free man or woman belonging to an allied nation, and whenever the case should arise, the governors of the provinces were ordered to set such persons free. In a short time more than eight hundred Sicilian slaves obtained their freedom under this law, and it was natural that many thousands should claim the same advantage, whether they had a legal right to it or not. The measure had been passed too hastily, and the result was that it seemed necessary to suspend it for a time. An immense number of slaves who had presented themselves in the hope of being emancipated were ordered to return to their masters. They knew what awaited them if they obeyed, and they took sanctuary in the sacred grove of the mysterious Palici, where they were protected as in a city of refuge by the immemorial tradition of sanctity which clung to the place. There, from hot, still pools, the intermittent springs send up from time to time high jets of steam and boiling mud,

and then again these sink down and the froth subsides in the earthy cauldron and all is very still; for thus it pleased the twin gods to manifest their power. These pools are near the place now called Palagonia.

It is believed that from their safe retreat the slaves treated with their masters, in order that they might be taken back without suffering punishment for their attempt to gain freedom; but that, with the true Greek instinct for treachery, they agreed among themselves in a conspiracy to rise against their owners at a certain time. And so they did; for not long afterwards the slaves of two landholders in Halicyæ, which is now Salemi, murdered their masters in their sleep, and rousing the slaves of neighbouring farms got together a force of two hundred and fortified themselves on a precipitous height to await events. Presumably, they expected news of other risings in the neighbourhood, but they had either anticipated the time agreed upon, or their friends lacked courage, for none stirred. The prætor appeared with a body of soldiers to storm the place, but finding it stronger than he had expected, he bought the services of a condemned criminal who had escaped justice and turned bandit, and this man was received in a friendly way by the slaves, with his troop of brigands, and he immediately betrayed them. The runaways fought to the death, and those who survived the combat that ensued threw themselves over the precipice rather than be taken alive.

The general rising took place a short time afterwards. Again a number of slaves murdered their master, eighty against one man; and in a few days two thousand were under arms. They beat a detachment of Roman infantry in the first engagement, and before long their numbers swelled to twenty thousand foot and two thousand horse, the latter being, of course, the armed and mounted herdsmen of the great slave-owners. Their leader was one Salvius, a soothsayer, and he promptly attacked the strong place, Morgantia, now Giardinelli, on the southern slope of Monte Judica, overlooking the great Catanian plain. He promised freedom to the slaves within if they would join him; but their masters promised it to them, also, and so outtempted the tempters, for the slaves in the city rightly judged that there would be time enough to run away if their masters did not keep the promise made, as indeed happened afterwards, when the siege was raised and the besiegers retired again to the groves of the Palici.

But meanwhile another leader had arisen in the west, had gathered ten thousand men, and attacked Lilybæum. He was the steward of a great estate, an astrologer, and a man of unquestionable courage and ready resource. Before Lilybæum he failed, of course, and he suffered a reverse when he withdrew from the siege; but still he gathered more and more followers, and many of the poor freemen came into his camp, till at last he exchanged embassies with Salvius, who had

proclaimed himself king under the name of Trypho, and presently the two joined forces in a place called Triocala, the 'thrice fair.' But there King Trypho thought it wiser to throw King Athenio into prison and to rule alone, and he built a wall round the town, with a moat, and erected a little palace, and wore purple, and was accompanied by lictors. All these things happened in 104 B.C.

It was not until the following year that the Romans sent an army to attack the slave capital, and the magnitude of the force shows what was thought of the insurrection in Rome. It consisted of fourteen thousand Romans and Italians with two thousand Bithynians, Thessalians, Lucanians, and others. King Trypho now set King Athenio at liberty; what is more surprising is that Athenio does not seem to have resented his long imprisonment. He advised meeting the Romans in open battle, and charging at the head of two hundred horsemen he rode like a madman through the Roman ranks, leaving a broad river of blood where he had passed. In the desperate charge he was wounded in many places and fell at last, and when the shout went up that he was dead, the slave army fled in dismay. Yet the Romans did not pursue them, and they had time to retire upon Triocala, when it was found that Athenio was still alive. By skill, by bribery, and by actual fighting he kept the Romans off, and when Trypho died in the

following year, Athenio became the sole king of the slaves in his stead.

He now almost got possession of Sicily and ravaged the country in all directions, besieging cities and making himself master of more than one strong place. The apparently inexplicable inactivity of one prætor after another was accounted for well enough in Rome on the simple theory that each was bribed in succession by Athenio, and each was accordingly exiled at the end of his term of office; and when at last a man was found in the Consul Manlius Aquillius, the power of the slaves had grown so great that it required two years of preparation, and hard fighting, to crush it out of existence.

The end of Athenio was as romantic as his short and brilliant career had been. In the final battle which decided his fate he exposed his life with the recklessness of a man who stakes a kingdom on every sword-thrust. On the other side Aquillius fought no less bravely for a baser motive; he had refused bribes, most probably, where his predecessor had accepted them, but only in order that by a complete victory he might have better opportunities of enriching himself, for he was the man into whose all-greedy mouth Mithridates is said at last to have poured molten gold, so that he died. Nevertheless, he fought like a brave man, and in the battle he met Athenio face to face; they fought one another hand to hand,

the Roman for gold, the Greek for freedom, while men looked on and held their breath. Then the Greek wounded the Roman in the breast, so that he had great scars to show long afterwards, when he was accused; but the Roman killed the Greek and got the victory.

After that he reduced the slaves' remaining strongholds one by one, and when the last thousand men surrendered on condition that their lives should be spared, Aquillius sent them all to Rome, to fight with wild beasts in the arena; but there, scorning to die the death of men condemned, they slew each other by the altars of the circus with the weapons that had been given them for the fight, and when they were all dead their leader Satyrus took his own life. Thus ended the great struggles for freedom which were fought by the slaves in Sicily during the forty years between 139 B.C. and 99 B.C., that is to say during more than a generation of men born in slavery, the sons and grandsons of those who first rose against the Roman oppression under Eunus the conjurer and soothsayer.

They were not all heroes; their revolutions generally began with treacherous murders of men asleep and grew by monstrous and wholesale plunder; their first leader died a coward's death, and more than once they all turned and fled in battle before the Romans' orderly advance. Yet they deserve the sym-

pathy of mankind for the sufferings that made them rebel, and for the courage many of them showed when their end was at hand. They had been trained to bear shackles, not arms, to receive blows, not to deal them, to think as convicts think, not as freemen; the armed overseer was their daily companion and his whip was familiar with their flesh; it was no wonder that they stabbed in the dark what was too strong for them by daylight, and conspired to murder those whom they were at first too weak to fight. If anything can make assassination pardonable it is the condition of the oppressed slave; and in the south, though there were thousands of rough Africans who tilled the soil in chains, there were many, too, who belonged to quite another race and class, Greeks from Asia Minor, skilled in every art, delicately trained and intellectually by far the superiors of men whose property they had become by the evil violence of pirates and robbers, or by the unhappy chances of disastrous war; and with them were many of their women, their sisters, their wives, and their daughters, of free blood and of good lineage, reduced with themselves to the social rank of items in an inventory, and living at the best in the mean condition of favourite animals. The provocation to murder must have been indeed more than a man could bear; and in the end many died very bravely, for men who are ready to throw themselves

from cliffs and precipices rather than be taken alive desire freedom more than they dread death, even though it be out of fear of living, and in the scale of bravery the names of Athenio and Satyrus may stand as high as many that are better remembered.

It is related that after the end of the slave wars, the enormous number of unburied bodies and the vast quantities of blood that had moistened the ground produced a plague of grasshoppers that ravaged the whole country. Holm considers this to be a somewhat fabulous tale, but says that it gives a good idea of the condition of Sicily. Entomologists may determine its possibility or explain what insect was taken for a grasshopper; it is at least certain that agriculture was temporarily checked by some visitation of the kind, which may well have had its origin in the frightful condition of many battlefields, where no attempt had been made to bury the dead.

Holm has given his opinion of the state of the island and of the results of the slave war in a passage which I cannot refrain from translating, for no historian has more carefully weighed the evidence of history nor formed upon it opinions which seem more just.

"Nevertheless," he writes, "it may justly be said that the island had, on the whole, profited by the slave wars. Sicily was on the high road to become the mere pastureland of a few great men, as was already

the case with many provinces of Italy. That which should have been prevented when the island became a 'prædium' of the Roman people, instead of a country given over to the Roman nobles, had actually happened more and more and in the course of time. The mighty slave wars arrested the land on this descending course. In these struggles it was especially the rich that suffered; the death of such numbers of slaves was a direct loss to them, but the wars cleared the air for the poor freemen. This result of the war is not a mere subjective construction; we may infer it from the orations against Verres, which, though containing numerous individual statements that are false, have nevertheless an undeniable value as portraying the condition of the island in Cicero's time. According to Cicero's description, Sicily is an island in which, on the whole, the well-to-do middle class preponderates, but in which excessive wealth is unusual. In this connexion it is a striking fact that there is hardly any mention of valuable works of art. With few exceptions no statues were owned by private citizens, whereas many possessed a silver saltcellar or a silver drinking-vessel. This preponderance of the middle class is a result of the slave wars, which produced a thorough clearing among the slaves and therefore also in the conditions of farming. No doubt many persons remained rich, in spite of the bad times, especially Roman landholders whose estates were not

exclusively in Sicily; but the worst masters had been the native imitators of the Romans, and those were altogether ruined if, indeed, they still existed at all. The middle-class citizens and the poor citizens thus found a field for their activity, and Sicily could again have a more healthy existence, both on its own account and with respect to Rome, which it was to supply with corn."

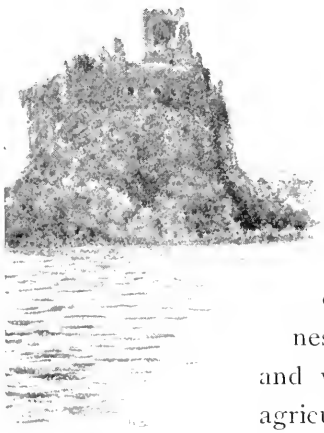
The civil wars of Rome proceeded naturally from the hatred of one class for another. Had the two been less evenly matched, the disturbance might have produced all the phenomena of the French Revolution, but Sulla and the aristocrats were as strong as Marius and the democracy, and stronger; and while it is always the instinct of the lower class to destroy the upper class altogether, the upper class, being unable to live without the help of the social inferiors whom it has such good reason to fear, necessarily aims at keeping them in a state not far removed from servitude. An upper class that has no means of controlling a lower class has no claim to be called an upper class at all, and is doomed either to destruction or to ridicule. In most modern countries the so-called aristocracies have chosen to be ridiculous rather than to be destroyed. The final triumph of Sulla did not destroy the power of the lower class, it controlled it. The true leader of the people was to be Julius Cæsar.

In Sicily the struggle had ended with Athenio's

death, and the island took no active part in the civil wars, but was governed alternately by the contending parties. When Marius, being on his way to Africa, wished to obtain water at Drepanum, he met with an energetic refusal on the part of the governor; a little later, his party was in power and the governor was one of his most active supporters; a little later again Sulla was in power, and the Marian governor retired hastily at the approach of Cneius Pompeius with six legions and a hundred and twenty ships; and the mild behaviour of Pompeius on this occasion is historical. The only city that resisted him was Thermæ on the north coast, and when he was about to reduce it to submission, the chief man of the city came to him, demanding that the whole blame of the resistance should be laid upon himself. Pompeius was touched and forgave him. Only on two or three occasions the youthful Roman general behaved with a coldness that approached cruelty, conversing calmly with political prisoners whom he had already condemned to death.

When Sulla undid what Caius Gracchus had done, and gave back to the Senate the jurisdiction which the reformer had succeeded in placing in the hands of the Roman knights, the governorship of Sicily was no longer given to a prætor, but to a proprætor, who resided in the island altogether and exercised his power more continually than the prætors had done; for while the latter had relied much upon the services

of tax farmers, who had every interest in hoodwinking their superior in order to enrich themselves, and in accusing him unjustly when he seemed to them unreasonably honest, the proprætor was able to extort money without their services, or at all events while controlling them for his own ends. This is the change in the form of provincial government that led to the frightful abuse of power of which Verres was found guilty.



CASTLE OF ACI CASTELLO, NEAR CATANIA

Those who know Sicily even superficially must easily realize that its conditions of prosperity could change with surprising quickness in the alternations of peace and war. It was an altogether agricultural country, but it was, and is still, the richest in the Mediterranean. I will compare it, in its different states, to a great foundry or manufactory. Everything required for the production of valuable merchandise is present, waiting to be smelted, cast, turned, and finished. Furnaces glow, hammers ring, lathes move silently and quickly, a thousand artisans are at work, and wealth is created hourly and instantly by sure and

industrious hands. Presently comes the check; there is war, and the enemy is at hand, or the men strike and go away in a body. The place is the same, and yet it is all at once a dreary wilderness, the fires are gone out, the wind howls through the vast deserted sheds, the machinery rusts in the silence, and it all looks as if only a miracle could bring back the extinguished life. Yet all things are ready for the making of wealth, as they were before. The enemy retires, or the strike is over, and in a day the factory is once again in the roar and blast of production, alive and awake.

Thus also Sicily lay waste from time to time, and awoke again to instant riches at the golden touch of peace. There is not a valley in the whole island where men have not lain in ambush to kill other men, nor a field that has not been dyed crimson, nor a lovely defile of the mountains whose rivulet has not run red. Within the narrow seagirt space, six hundred miles round, Greeks and Phœnicians, Carthaginians and Romans, Byzantines, Goths, Saracens, Normans, Frenchmen, Catalans, freemen, and slaves fought almost unceasingly for more than two thousand years; and in every brief interval of rest the rich soil brought forth its fruit a hundred fold, the blood-stained meadows blossomed again, and the battlefield of many nations was again the garden of the world. Excepting Rome and the surrounding plains

there is surely no like area in Europe where so many have died by violence; there is none where life is so ever ready to begin again.

It is, therefore, not strange that after the slave wars Sicily should have accumulated great wealth, especially as the island was, on the whole, well governed during that period, between the years 99 B.C. and 73 B.C. During the latter part of this time the office of quæstor, treasurer, in the western division, was held by Cicero, then a young man of thirty years, six years older than Julius Cæsar. It was during his quæstorship that he acquired the profound knowledge of Sicily which he displayed in his speeches against Verres, one of the most atrocious robbers of any age. It was then that he wandered in the neighbourhood of Syracuse, accompanied by a flattering court of distinguished Syracusans, who were not anxious to show him the tomb of Archimedes overgrown with brambles, because the great engineer had been an enemy to the Romans, and were quite willing to let the mild-mannered, book-loving quæstor give himself all the credit of the discovery. Of Cicero's earlier and later life it is useless to speak here, but it is necessary to dwell a little upon the evil career of the great criminal from whose robberies the cities of Sicily never entirely recovered. Cicero's speeches, on which the evidence against him rests, undoubtedly contained exaggerations, and were necessarily preju-

diced, but the consequences of Verres' government are undeniable. It must be remembered, too, that Verres was found guilty on the evidence of the thousands of witnesses who appeared against him, and that he escaped to Marseilles, where he spent the rest of his life, before the hearing was over. Only two of the seven speeches were delivered; the rest were compiled from the records of the case, but not spoken. The great Hortensius, engaged to defend the accused, abandoned the case, though he was reckoned the most eloquent lawyer of his day, with the possible exception of Cicero himself.

Verres was of noble birth, the son of a senator, who shared the plunder with him and defended him in the senate during his outrageous proceedings in the provinces. At the age of thirty, or little less, the young man was quæstor in Northern Italy, being then a partisan of Marius; but when he saw that Sulla was getting the better of the struggle, he promptly deserted to him, and was well received. He did not omit to steal all the public money then in his keeping, for which deed, in consideration of his accession to the party of Sulla, the latter never called him to account. Next, in the year 80 B.C., he was sent as legate to Asia Minor under Dolabella, a man of his own stamp, and it became his business to steal and extort money for his superior and himself.

He possessed the most admirable taste in matters of art, and, like more than one famous thief, he had the spirit of a collector. Beside his love of statues and pictures, his gross vices sink into insignificance; his greed of money, and his cruelty in obtaining it, alone rival his passion for works of beauty. He shut up the chief official at Sicyon in a closet and smoked him with green wood till he was almost dead, merely to obtain gold. He stole pictures and statues in Achaia; he took a quantity of gold from the temple of Pallas in Athens; he carried off the best statues from the temple of Apollo in Delos; he plundered Tenedos, Chios, and Samos, and positively ravaged Pamphylia. His operations were conducted on a gigantic scale, and he carried off the treasures of the temples in carts and in broad daylight. When the treasurer of the province died, Dolabella made Verres pro-treasurer, and in this office he extended his oppression throughout Milyas, Pisidia, and parts of Phrygia. As guardian, he robbed the only son of his best friend when the latter was dead; he robbed his enemies, the public, and the treasury, and returned to Italy with such a sum of money as enabled him to obtain a prætorship in Rome. He now turned his talents towards obtaining bribes in the cases which came before him for decision, and in robbing the fund for public buildings. On the ingenious excuse that the columns of the temple of Castor and Pollux

were not all exactly perpendicular, though the error could only be detected by means of the plumb-line, he succeeded in upsetting a contract for the construction, in favour of another contractor, in which transaction he pocketed large sums of money. But in comparison with what he did afterwards, his doings in Asia Minor and in Rome must be looked upon as mere exercises, in which he obtained the experience necessary for a career of destructive robbery that has never been equalled. So, in modern Naples, and perhaps elsewhere, thieves set their children to pick the pockets of a lay figure that rings bells at the least incautious touch.

In 73 B.C. Verres obtained the proprætorship of Sicily by lot. He held it three years, and left his mark of desolation upon its cities for centuries, if not forever. During the term of his office, the insurrection of the gladiators and slaves under Spartacus required all Rome's energy, and since Verres kept Sicily in subjection, and there were no signs of an outbreak under his governorship, he was allowed to do as he pleased until the measure of his iniquities was full, and he was finally called to account.

The story of his three years' government in Sicily, as told by Cicero in the Verrine orations, reads alternately like a fairy story and like a tale of almost prehistoric barbarism. It is a strange fact that when the staid Roman temper broke out and overstepped

all bounds, Romans went to lengths of fantastic display on the one hand and of horrible cruelty on the other which surpassed what we know of Greeks or Phœnicians. Cicero draws a picture of Verres during his stay in Syracuse, and of his official journeys, in which we see the Roman proprætor carried by eight stalwart slaves in a litter, lying upon cushions stuffed with rose leaves, clad in transparent gauze and Maltese lace, with garlands of roses on his head and round his neck, and delicately sniffing at a little net filled also with roses, lest any other odour should offend his nostrils. He had an artistic soul, and delighted in details that pleased the sense. He loved beauty, and wherever he went the fairest of the Sicilian ladies were his guests, while he robbed their fathers, their husbands, and their brothers. This important business, which was, indeed, the main one of his life, was everywhere managed with precision and despatch. He was never at a loss for an excuse for extorting money from a rich man. One of his methods was to seize upon valuable favourite slaves of great landholders, accusing them of conspiring against him and condemning them to death at his pleasure, only that their masters might ransom them at ten times their value. Or, he would accuse of conspiracy a slave who had no existence, and then imprison the master for not producing the fictitious delinquent. The unfortunate owner had the choice of ransoming himself

at a ruinous price or of languishing in prison for an unlimited length of time. He spent the winter and generally the summer in Syracuse, where there is no winter's day without sunshine and no summer's noon without the cool sea breeze. In the warm months he pitched his tents of fine linen at the entrance of the harbour, most probably under the shadow of the Plemmyrian promontory, where the breeze blows all day, and there he spent his time dressed in the effeminate tunic and purple cloak of the Greeks, in the company of his youthful son, who gave promise of imitating his father, surrounded by his cohort of flatterers, panders, and henchmen, curled and perfumed like himself. The Syracusan ladies came to his feasts, and sometimes complained bitterly when the daughter of a comic actor was treated with as much ceremony as themselves; but still they came, and lingered, and came again.

It was an organized robbery, and Verres needed a base of operations and a harbour of export, whence he could ship his booty to his Italian estates. These appear to have been conveniently situated for the purpose in the neighbourhood of Velia, once Elea, the home of philosophy, but now, if it has a name, called Ascea. There, a little to the south of Licosa point, the small stream of the Alento swells to a torrent in winter and shrinks to a rivulet under the summer sun, when the air is poisoned with the southern fever. The

fishermen beach their boats upon the sandy shore where Verres landed the wealth of Sicily from the great freight ship he had caused the Sicilians to build for him, for this sole purpose. But the base of operations he chose in Sicily was Messina; and in order that the Mamertine inhabitants might be friendly to him, and might not hinder his proceedings, he spared their city when he plundered all the rest, and excused them from contributions of corn and from supplying a man-of-war for the Sicilian fleet, which they would otherwise have been bound to do. Moreover, they were not obliged to supply soldiers and sailors for the service. In other cities he made a regular charge for giving the supposed soldiers and seamen permanent leave, at a fixed price, by the year. It is needless to say that besides the price of the leave given, the ingenious governor pocketed the pay which would have been due if the men had served their time.

He neglected the fleet altogether, and the consequence was that Cilician pirates infested the waters about the island. Considering what has been done before and since in Sicily, it may well be supposed that Verres had a standing agreement with the pirates themselves. Once, however, in a fit of conscientiousness, he allowed two of his officers with ten men-of-war to capture, near Megara, a pirate vessel so heavily laden that it was not able to get away. He appropriated the cargo, which consisted of the most valuable

booty, to his own use, picked out the old and useless men among the crew and threw them into prison, gave the young and handsome ones to his friends as slaves, and sent six musicians, who were found among them, to Rome, as a present to his lawyer, Hortensius. As for the captain of the pirates, no one ever saw him, but some time afterwards, Verres caused a poor Roman citizen, who was perfectly innocent, to be executed for his crimes. When Syracuse rose in indignation and demanded the execution of the pirates, the governor took a number of other persons from prison and caused them to be put to death with their heads covered, lest they should be recognized.

He was now obliged by public opinion to take some action against the pirates, and he sent out a small squadron in pursuit of them. The vessels sailed out with flying colours, and with every appearance of being fit for the expedition; but in reality they were short handed, and were so completely unprovided with provisions that when they reached Pachynus, a few miles to the southward, the whole company went ashore to seek for food, and, finding nothing better, they dug up the scrub palms and ate the roots. At the first news that pirates were in the vicinity, the commander cut his cable rather than lose time in getting the anchor up, made sail, and, having the best vessel, was out of sight almost before the ships he commanded could get under way. The pirates overhauled them

on the high sea, took the men prisoners, and burnt the vessels. The news was known in Syracuse late at night, when Verres had retired to rest after an orgy; but no one dared to wake the sleeping governor. He was roused by the voices of the multitude without, and, when he appeared at dawn in military dress, he barely escaped being torn to pieces. Four pirate vessels quietly sailed into the harbour of Syracuse, and, coming close to the shore, their crews pelted the infuriated crowd with the roots of the scrub palms found in the ill-fated Roman vessels. The pirates departed in peace, and before long the unfortunate captains of the Roman ships were ransomed. Verres, of course, arrested them and condemned them to death as an example, and they were handed over to the executioner, who exacted a large sum of money from their relatives in return for his promise that they should have an easy death. Being dead, their bodies became the governor's property, and he exacted a second ransom for them by threatening to let them be devoured by dogs and wolves.

It is easy to imagine the sort of persons by whom Verres was surrounded, men ready for every deed, accessible to every bribe, and quick to invent means of extortion. Allowing for the changes of time and the differences in his situation, these fellows represented the life-guard of a tyrant, bound to him by every personal interest, and sharing, in a small degree, in

the profits of every crime. Cicero has preserved their names with some of their characteristics. I shall spare the reader both, and go on to tell how in a short time Verres made himself master of the wealth of the island by their assistance. One of his favourite methods was to get possession by legal frauds of large sums of money and other treasures left by will both to individual heirs and to temples. On one occasion he presented a large inheritance to the people of Syracuse with a great show of munificence, but was careful to reserve the greater part of it for himself. It was an easy matter, also, to find persons who had been tried under the previous prætor, but had been found not guilty, and to extort ransoms from them, on promise of not trying them again.

One of the most atrocious acts of Verres was his robbery of Sthenius, the honourable citizen of Thermæ who had won the sympathy of Cneius Pompeius by frankly assuming the blame of his fellow-citizens' conduct. He was a collector of works of art, and had spent much of his life in gathering beautiful pictures and statues, Corinthian and Delian bronzes, and the like. Verres, when he was his guest, saw all these things, judged them good enough for his own collection, and seized upon them at once. It was not until he attempted to carry off the statues that belonged to the city itself that Sthenius opposed him. Verres retorted by causing a false accusation to be brought

against him, and in spite of the efforts made in Rome in Sthenius' favour, found him guilty and appropriated his whole fortune. In gratitude to Aphrodite, Verres presented her shrine at Eryx, now San Giuliano, with a beautiful figure of Eros selected from the spoil.

Before long another opportunity of wholesale robbery presented itself. The rebellion which had broken out in Spain under Sertorius, one of the former generals of Marius, was at an end, and Verres conceived the ingenious plan of seizing ships that arrived from the northern coast, on the ground that there were fugitive Sertorians on board of them. The crews were thrown into prison in the Latomie of Syracuse, and were generally executed in the place of pirates who were allowed to escape, while the cargoes of the vessels became the governor's property. From this time his cruelties increased with his greed. He caused a Roman citizen to be scourged and crucified, which was a crime against the liberty of the Roman people; he beheaded more than a hundred Roman citizens; he slew whom he pleased, and in every case he seized the victim's goods. Moreover, he caused enormous sums to be appropriated to erect statues to himself, not only in the Sicilian cities, but even in Rome.

The most wholesale of all his robberies was that of the corn which was supposed to be sent from the island to Rome. He sent one-third to the capital,

and sold the other two-thirds for his own benefit. He ground the tax-gatherers, who were of course tax-farmers, and the latter beat and starved the landholders till they paid the uttermost measure they possessed. Whole cities were laid under contribution in this way, and the islands near Sicily did not escape. In three years, according to Cicero, he stole about thirty-six millions of sestertii, appropriated for buying corn over and above that yielded by the tribute, and the sum is equal to about two hundred and thirty thousand pounds sterling. It would not be despised even by a modern political swindler, and money was worth far more then than now. For Verres, however, it was only an item; the whole amount of his vast robberies cannot well be guessed, much less correctly calculated, either from Cicero's statements or from other sources. It may have amounted to a million of pounds sterling, or to much more, if the value of works of art be taken into consideration. Mark Antony is said to have squandered eight hundred millions of pounds sterling in his fifty-three years of life, but at one time he disposed of Italy and Asia Minor.

What is most astonishing is that, when Verres' third term of office was over, nothing was done, and his successor was appointed without comment. The Romans were not easily moved to compassion by the wrongs of those subject to them, Sicily was full of slaves, and Rome had

only lately crushed out the great rebellion of Spartacus in the south of Italy. In Capua, the luxurious capital of pleasure-loving Campania, one Lentulus Batiatus had a company of Gallic and Thracian gladiators, among whom was Spartacus, himself a Thracian of great strength, courage, and military talent, and possessing a sort of dignified superiority hardly to have been expected in one who had been born a shepherd and had turned highwayman in his own country. A faithful woman loved him and shared his life, and perhaps his death; and she had the gift of divination, and prophesied that he should become very great and terrible and have a happy end; which things came true, for he was the terror of the Romans and he died in battle. The whole company of gladiators numbered two hundred, and they conspired to escape from their bondage, but only seventy-eight of them succeeded. These seized upon the iron spits and carving-knives and whittles which they found in a cook's shop, and marched out of Capua in broad daylight, for they were all trained fighters, and very strong men, and it was better not to hinder them. They met upon the road certain waggons, laden with gladiators' weapons, the same perhaps that were to have been used by themselves in the coming show. Having armed themselves, they marched southward and took possession of the crater of Vesuvius, then extinct and overgrown with grass and wild vines. The place was almost impregnable, and when three

thousand Roman soldiers attacked it on the most accessible side, the gladiators climbed down by the vines on the other, came round the crater, and fell upon their assailants in the rear, putting them to shameful flight and getting possession of their weapons. Spartacus

VESUVIUS, ON THE DAY BEFORE THE ERUPTION OF MAY, 1900

was the leader of the band. He proclaimed all slaves to be free, and in an incredibly short space of time he was ravaging all Southern Italy at the head of forty thousand desperate men. In the next year he had seventy thousand, then a hundred thousand, and he thought of attacking Rome itself. He defeated one

consular army after another, made many captives, and forced the Romans to fight as gladiators for his amusement, as he had once fought for theirs. His plan was to lead his army out of Italy in the end, and either to plunder other countries or to return to his home. But his men loved the south, as almost all fighting men have always loved it, and in the south he met his death at last. When it came to the end he was opposed to Crassus in a great battle, and before it began he slew his horse in the sight of his men, saying that if he won the day he should have horses enough, but that if he lost it he should need none. He lost the day, and died, and they traced his last charge by the heaps of the slain, but no one could find what was left of his body. Then the Romans impaled six thousand of his men upon stakes along the Appian way. And these things took place while Verres was governor of Sicily, besides much more that had the interest of life and death for the Roman people.

When the time was past, however, the Sicilians determined to bring Verres to justice if it were possible, by demanding restitution of money extorted from them. Verres belonged to the aristocratic party, which had always employed for its defender the famous Hortensius, called the 'King of the Forum.' Cicero had made himself beloved by the Sicilians during his quæstorship in the west, and he advised them to bring a collective action. Excepting Messina, which Verres had

highly favoured, and Syracuse, all the principal cities sent deputations to Rome to represent them.

It is not my intention to enter into all the elaborate proceedings which made up the trial of the great thief. His friends attempted everything legal and illegal in the hope of preventing the case from coming to a hearing. Cicero was without doubt the advocate chosen by the Sicilian people for the prosecution, but an accomplice of the accused made a formal attempt to be chosen in Cicero's place, and the first of the Verrine orations was delivered in order to dispose of this adversary. Cicero then asked for an interval of one hundred and ten days before the trial, to admit of his travelling through Sicily in order to collect evidence. This was no sooner granted than the friends of Verres trumped up a suit of a similar nature to recover a claim for alleged extortions in Achaia, for which an interval of only one hundred and eight days was asked, in order that this suit might be called before that of Verres, thus putting off the latter's case indefinitely. Cicero departed at once upon his journey, and although the friends of Verres hindered him at every step, especially in Syracuse, where the new governor exercised a good deal of influence in favour of the accused man, the great lawyer had no difficulty in collecting such a mass of evidence as made the criminal's acquittal almost impossible. On the other hand the friends of Verres displayed the utmost activity;

they made unsuccessful attempts to bribe Cicero himself, and, failing in this, they spread the report that he had received the bribes which he had refused. The judges were also above corruption. Verres, however, by a liberal expenditure of money, succeeded in bringing about the election of his lawyer, Hortensius, and of his friend, Quintus Metellus, to be consuls in the following year. The governor of Sicily was a brother of this Metellus, and another brother was designated as supreme judge of the court before which the case was to be tried. The court itself, however, as is well known, consisted practically of jurymen, which each side possessed the right of challenging. The plan of the defence was to protract the proceedings into the following year, and this was not by any means an impossibility, as the courts did not sit during the long periods set apart for public games at the close of the year, and it was expected that the prosecution would consume many weeks in hearing evidence. Witnesses had been collected from every part of the Roman dominions, from Asia Minor, from Sicily, from the islands of Lipari and Malta, and thousands of persons, not themselves interested in the trial, had travelled to Rome out of curiosity, to be present at the great judicial conflict before the games began. The suit at last opened in the temple of Castor and Pollux in the Forum. It is said that the roofs of the surrounding houses, the porticos and the steps of the

temples, were thronged by the vast multitude of those who had been robbed by Verres, who mourned the parents and brethren he had murdered, and whose inheritance had been taken from them to swell his enormous hoard. There were men, women and children even from the shores of the Black Sea, from Mount Taurus and from Greece; there were noble Greeks and Phœnicians of ancient lineage, officials ruined and wrongfully disgraced, and priests from the temples whence the governor had collected his magnificent gallery of statues, pictures and precious vessels. Cicero was pressed for time; the games, which must cause a suspension of the proceedings, were at hand; his case was very strong, and he determined to let it rest upon the evidence alone. Instead of making a long address, he began by the examination of the witnesses, and from the first day the defence was ruined. Hortensius made a feeble attempt to change the course of the proceedings, and then almost immediately threw up the case and advised Verres to leave Rome. He did so without delay, and conveyed himself and the greater part of his ill-gotten wealth to Marseilles, where he was suffered to live unmolested for many years. Had he awaited the verdict, he would at most have been exiled, but he might have suffered the confiscation of his property. Cicero composed the remainder of the Verrine orations from the reports of the trial and from his own notes, and published them

as an account of the greatest judicial triumph he had as yet achieved. Verres lived to hear of Cicero's execution under the proscription proclaimed by Mark Antony, and which was his own death warrant, for his name was on the list. It is recorded that he died with the courage and equanimity of a good and brave man, but he is by no means the only great criminal in history who has behaved with firmness and even dignity when confronted with the executioner.

Thus ended the famous trial, not indeed with any restitution of goods stolen and extorted from the oppressed Sicilians, nor with any adequate punishment of the chief offender, but at least in a public act which was on the side of justice, and for which Rome deserves some credit in the stormy days that preceded the final overthrow of the republic.

In the great struggle between Julius Cæsar and the party of the Senate, Sicily played no great part. When Julius Cæsar determined to occupy the island, Marcus Porcius Cato withdrew at once, advising the Sicilians to make no useless resistance. Later, Pompey the Great burned a number of Cæsar's ships when they were fitting out in the harbour of Messina. In 47 B.C., when Cæsar carried war into Africa, Sicily was once more a base of operations, and the conqueror gathered his fleet in Lilybæum, as both the Scipios had done before him. It was his intention to extend the rights of citizenship to the inhabitants of the island, and he

seems to have granted favours of this nature to several cities; but his murder checked the extension of civilization, and when Mark Antony passed a law making all Sicilians Roman citizens it was merely for the sake of obtaining a large sum of money, and was never carried out. In 43 B.C., during Octavian's wars, Sextus Pompeius, the great Pompey's son, succeeded in getting possession of the whole island almost without striking a blow, most probably by promising the Sicilians the long-coveted rights of citizenship.

In the division of the Roman possessions among the triumvirs, Augustus, still called Octavian, took Africa, Sardinia, and Sicily. Sicily was of the highest importance to him as being the granary from which Rome derived her corn, and being still in the possession of Sextus it was evidently necessary for Octavian to drive him out before taking any other steps to extend his power. But he did not succeed at once; his fleet came into conflict with that of Sextus in the Straits of Messina, where his officers and seamen were at a disadvantage owing to their ignorance of the currents, and withdrew from the fight as far as the place now called Bagnara. Sextus remained in possession.

After the battle of Philippi, Sicily was the only part of the great Roman territory which was not yet in the power of the triumvirate, and became a refuge for all those who were unwilling to submit to its dictation. The continuation of the civil war and the

differences which arose between the triumvirs left Sextus for some time in undisputed possession of the island, and before long he found it advantageous to attempt an alliance with Mark Antony. The wise Octavian, however, used more diplomatic means for preventing such a friendship, and took to wife Scribonia, whose niece was the wife of Sextus. Antony, who at first had not accepted the latter's overtures, now appealed to him directly for help, in order to attack Southern Italy; but Octavian promptly reconciled himself with Antony, and the latter sent Sextus back to his island. He, however, fully understanding the strength of his position, continued to control the price of bread in Rome by hindering or facilitating the export of corn from Sicily at his pleasure. He at last succeeded in obtaining a sort of acknowledgment of his rights over Sicily, Sardinia, Corsica, with the neighbouring islands, and Achaia, for a period as long as that during which Octavian and Antony were to hold the territories allotted to them; and in return for these dominions and other advantages he was to provide Rome with corn and he was to marry his daughter to Octavian's nephew. But the treaty was unsound and the peace it concluded was of short duration. It was signed at Baiæ, close to Misenum, in 39 B.C., and the generals feasted each other with great rejoicing.

In the following year one of the generals of Sextus

betrayed Sardinia and Corsica to Octavian, who had not meant to abide by the treaty if he could get any advantage by breaking it. Sextus sent a fleet up the coast to attack Octavian's ships, and defeated them off Cumæ, just north of Misenum; in a duel which was fought between the two admirals, when their ships had grappled each other, Menecrates, who fought for Sextus, was wounded in the thigh with a barbed dart and sprang overboard rather than be taken; but his ships were victorious after his death. More than once after this Octavian made attempts to land in Sicily before he at last succeeded. He lost most of a new fleet in a gale of wind in the Straits of Messina, and set himself to make greater preparations. He built and collected three fleets, one at Baiæ in the basinlike lagoon now called the Mare Morto or "dead sea," one at Tarentum, one in an African harbour. The date of sailing was fixed, the same for all three, and two were commanded by the triumvirs Octavian and Lepidus in person. A furious southwester destroyed most of Octavian's ships in the bay of Velia just north of Cape Palinurus, if not on the awful rocks of the grim promontory; Antony's fleet ran back to shelter in Tarentum; that of Lepidus, being before the wind, made Lilybæum, and he marched across Sicily to Messina, claiming Sicily for himself. When at last the others could put to sea again, Octavian landed in Sicily and brought the war to

a decisive issue in a battle near Mylæ, now Milazzo, in the month of August, 36 B.C. Sextus Pompeius fled to the East, and his domination was at an end. In the following year, when attempting to found an independent power in Asia, he fell into the hands of one of Antony's generals and was put to death. The battle of Naulochus, near Milazzo, was not the end of Octavian's wars; he had not yet cleared the world of his adversaries; Lepidus indeed surrendered when his soldiers deserted him, and he begged for his life upon his knees, but Actium had not yet been fought and Antony had not stabbed himself in Egypt.

From the date of Octavian's conquest the position of Sicily began to change, and it was long before it again assumed a similar importance in history. With the empire began a period of peace and of agricultural development which raised the island to the height of prosperity; it had been demonstrated that no one could hold Rome who did not hold the granary whence Rome obtained her daily bread, and the emperors held it fast for centuries and bestowed exceptional care upon its good management. It had suffered severely during the wars of Sextus Pompeius, and Augustus sent a colony of Romans to Syracuse. The city, once seventeen miles in circumference, comprising five cities in one, had shrunk till it consisted of Ortygia and a small part of Achradina, much as it is to-day. Colonies were established in like manner in many other cities

of the island and even in Panormus, and the Latin influence began to be felt throughout the country, though not in such a manner as at first threatened the generally Greek spirit and the almost universal use of the Greek language. Brigandage had become a permanent evil, and was never again stamped out. The world-famous temple of Aphrodite on the war-worn heights of Eryx lost its importance, and but a few priests and priestesses remained there. In the interior many of the smaller towns were become shepherds' hamlets. Holm criticises many of these statements, which are taken from Strabo, as being much exaggerated, and the judgment of the master historian of Sicily cannot be treated lightly. But we must not forget the simile of the factory, and for the time being, during the wars of Sextus, the fires were extinguished, and the country must have assumed that desolate air which is characteristic of any agricultural region when agriculture is temporarily checked. The flocks and herds live on, though they may not multiply, from year to year, and the shepherd and herdsman drive their charge to pasture in lonely valleys, preserving a sort of wealth that does not easily perish all at once. But where no corn is planted, no corn will grow, and where the stubble of last year stands in the unploughed field, there it will rot, while the plough rusts beside the desolate hut, and the starving people wander among the woods and mountains, living on roots and wild fruit, or snaring

the small game when they have the skill. If the island had not suffered very much, Augustus would not have thought it necessary to recolonize so much of it. The Roman farmers were far less skilful than the Greeks and the colonists were probably not the best of the agriculturists; it was not to teach the islanders that thousands of Italians were sent among them, but rather to replenish the exhausted population, and to revive the country, that its matchless soil might bear corn enough to feed Rome, instead of only grazing cattle which could be raised as well elsewhere. It is stated that the colonists were given land that belonged to the state, and that the original landholders were not deprived of any property. To make this possible, as it was, great tracts of ownerless country must have been lying fallow.

Yet the cities were not ruined, and the old vitality was not dead in them. With the increased safety of the open country, the life spread out again in all directions, less Greek than before, and more Roman, but classic still and full of a certain free beauty that could not be stamped out by anything short of universal destruction. The Greek blood was mixed and tainted, but it was Greek still. Even to-day, there are towns, such as Piana dei Greci, near Palermo, where the language is spoken altogether, after nearly two thousand and five hundred years. It is easy to guess how thoroughly Hellenic Sicily must still have been in the

days of Augustus, when Greek was the fashionable language of Roman society, and Greek art was the delight of every man who was rich enough to own a statue or a picture. It is hard to understand why Romans thought it such bitter hardship to be exiled to Sicily that they sometimes preferred death to such a fate. They must have loved their city with something more than patriotism, with the almost childish attachment of the true Parisian for Paris.

Until the completion of the Roman conquest Sicily had preserved a sort of independence of character, with peculiarities of manners and customs which were not only Greek, but individual and different from all that characterized the southern mainland. It was the intention of Augustus to make the south altogether homogeneous with the rest of Italy, and though this was never completely accomplished either by him or his successors, it was chiefly by his efforts that the great change was brought about. Before the Roman conquest, it would not have occurred to any one to think of Sicily otherwise than as an extension of Greece; since then, it has been impossible to consider it except as a part of Italy. It never was at any time the residence of a Roman emperor, but some of the more important emperors visited it from time to time. Augustus spent some months in the island in 22 and 21 B.C. at the time when he created the Roman colonies. Caligula is recorded to have fled from Messina

by night, frightened by an eruption of Etna, and to have celebrated games in Syracuse. Hadrian was in Sicily 126 A.D. and it is an undoubted fact that he made the ascent of the volcano at this time. Septimius Severus, before becoming emperor, was proconsul in Sicily.

The Roman influence to which the island was now subjected was strong enough to check the development of Greek culture, though not to destroy the Greek character of the people; and though an occasional rhetorician such as Cæcilius of Calacte or Sextus Clodius acquired some reputation, Sicily produced neither poets nor historians of importance, and the art of that period shows rapid degeneration.

Although it may be said on the whole that what remains of ancient monuments in the island is by nature Greek, yet with the exception of the great temples, and not even excepting all of these, there is not much that has not suffered from what the Romans doubtless called improvement. In Syracuse, for instance, it seems certain that the Greek theatre was 'improved' by the Romans, and that the original simplicity of the noble stage was marred by the introduction of more or less degenerate ornaments. The same and more may be said of the amphitheatre, which must have been repeatedly enlarged and adorned.

The theatre of Taormina is one of the most com-

pletely Roman buildings in Sicily, though it undoubtedly occupies the site of the Greek theatre which preceded it. If it is one of the most beautiful spots in the whole known world, this is not due to the skill of the Roman builders, but rather to the astounding contrasts of nature which fall within the view, the vast height of the snow-capped volcano, the smooth enamel of the southern sea, the bold but strangely graceful curves of the hills on the right, the sheer fall of the land on the left, the incredible wealth of colour in nature, and the depth of the airy perspective in which every separate distance has a separate value, from the furthest line of the horizon to the soft outlines of the Calabrian hills, from the misty crown of Etna to the near fortress of Mola high on the right; and then, nearer still, to the rich brown ruin of the Roman stage at the spectator's feet. Standing on the highest tier of the theatre, a single column rears its graceful shape against the distance, insignificant before the whole, as a moment in the midst of eternity, but lovely with all the beauty that a single moment may contain. No Greek would have reared a gallery of columns above the theatre, but one may well forgive the bad taste of the Roman architect for the sake of the something romantic which never could have been Greek, and which clings to the ruins of his work. The traveller pauses and asks himself, perhaps in vain, why it is that a stronger human inter-

est lies in the ruins of Roman buildings than in any of the exquisite monuments preserved to us from

THE HIGHEST TIER OF THE THEATRE AT TAORMINA

Grecian times; why the Coliseum, which is really hideous, has a far stronger hold upon our feelings than the Parthenon, which expresses the highest con-

ception of genius; why the single column in the theatre of Taormina touches the heart, whereas the superb theatre of Syracuse, faultless at almost every point, only imposes upon the judgment and pleases the taste; or why the fame of Hera at Girgenti, noble and perfect under a perfect sky, has not the power of stirring deep memories with a thrill of imaginative life which is felt in every shadowy corner and gloomy recess of the catacombs below San Giovanni in Syracuse. The more often such a question presents itself, the harder it is to answer. Romance and beauty are neither the same, nor do they proceed from the same source; the one is often most abundantly present where the other is most completely lacking; beauty of form, of thought, and of execution was almost a prerogative of the early Greeks. This is so certain that the mere word Greek is often used in English and in other languages as synonymous with beautiful. We say 'Greek features,' and we mean the most perfect features found in humanity; we say Greek art, and we mean the highest things that art has ever thought or done; Greek philosophy is the source of all our philosophic thought, the Greek epic poem is almost unrivalled and wholly unsurpassed, the Greek play is the inimitable model after which the playwrights of the world have shaped their tragedies and their comedies ever since. Yet, to most men, the Greeks themselves, as we seem to know them, with their

refinements, their sensitive taste, their talent for treachery, and their genius for art, are no more sympathetic than the Japanese, who possess many of the same characteristics, much of the same sensibility, and an artistic culture which in its way is quite as unrivalled as anything of which Greece could boast. The parallel might be carried far, and the recent general interest which the world has taken in Japan has collected abundant materials for an extensive comparison, of which the Japanese themselves may be justly proud. But so far as human nature is concerned, so far as their thoughts appeal to our thoughts, their motives to our motives, their ideal of honour to ours, they might as well be inhabitants of another planet; and they doubtless smile at the unceasing efforts of modern Europeans to understand them, precisely as the subtle Greek was secretly amused by the Roman's clumsy attempts to imitate him.

No one has ever successfully defined romance. It may, perhaps, be that indefinable something in thought, word, and deed, and in the monuments that recall both deeds and thoughts, which makes us feel akin with the hero, the poet and the saint; that something which produces in the reader of history or fiction the intoxicating illusion that identifies him with the chief actor in the story, which makes the traveller pause upon the spot where some great fight was fought ages ago by men of his race, and wish with a longing

which he can neither understand nor control, that he too might have lived then to strike a blow in their good cause, to shed his blood with theirs, to fall where they so memorably fell. It is that something which seizes upon a whole audience that witnesses in a play the conflict of its own passions — that something which no audience, however cultivated, however trained in classic thought, ever quite feels for a Greek play like 'Œdipus Tyrannus,' though it be played in a modern language, by the greatest actors of modern times, though its theatrical form is so perfect that every modern writer would imitate it if he could, and though its story is full of the most breathless and unflagging interest.

We do not readily realize how much Christianity has had to do with our conception of manly honour. It has influenced also our feeling for the romantic much more than we may be inclined to admit. Æsthetically speaking, as well as socially, Christianity is the link that connects us with the ancients, and the connexion has been through Rome and Italy, not through Greeks or Asiatics. With Eastern Christians, the contrary has taken place, and one need only look at the difference between us and them, with regard to social honour, to understand that our standard is Roman, and theirs Greek, that we feel sympathy for Regulus, while they find their ideal in Pericles, if not in Alcibiades; and that this difference is fundamental, lasting, and

almost unvarying. For us, the high-water mark of romance is in the middle ages, somewhere between the first and last Crusades, but somehow we feel that the romantic began in that sort of prevision of Christian honour and self-sacrifice, sometimes found among Romans, but never, I think, among Greeks, — the idea of honour that made Virginius stab his daughter in the Forum, that prompted Curtius to spring armed into the gulf, and sent Regulus back to certain death for the sake of his plighted word. This connexion of the thought of honour with Rome is one of those matters, more of sentiment than of history, more of instinctive feeling than of demonstrable fact, concerning which it is not good to argue too much, lest one be led away into finding specious reasons, where the true reason eludes the thinker. The undeniable and evident corollary, however, is that Christianity is, in some way or other, the bridge over which we lead our thoughts back to the ancient world.

This link or bridge connects the reign of Augustus and the Augustan age with the times of Constantine, and includes a period which is fraught with legends of good men and bad, during which the south has no political history worth recording, but during which its whole nature and appearance were inwardly and outwardly changed by the preaching of Christianity, by the examples of the many martyrs, and by the steady growth of a new morality which, from small

beginnings and in opposition to what seemed overwhelming odds, gradually encroached upon the ancient system, threw it into confusion, and finally drove it out altogether. That period is a sort of long miracle play, in which devoted men appear as the chief characters; apostles, missionary bishops, and saintly presbyters on the one side, and, on the other, emperors, prætors, proconsuls, and luxurious Romans, the enslaved multitude of the nameless poor ranged with the first, against the dimly splendid power of Rome. In such a conflict history becomes personal narrative, and the individual leader stands out from the confusion of the struggle, the centre of action, of interest, and of glory, the natural type and predestined representative of the Christian man, the champion and protagonist of Christian freedom against heathen slavery. So, too, in Homeric times, the leaders stood out before the hosts on each side and challenged one another, and the story of war was the record of their deeds; while the ranks of Greeks and Trojans, unnoticed and unsung, fought obscure battles for life and death, and made the history which their chiefs adorned.

First came the rumour of Christianity from Palestine, travelling westward, as all new things travel, away from unchanging Asia, towards all change and progress and advancing thought. For the most it came by slaves, who told each other tales of wonder,

tugging in chains at the galley oar, in the foul air between decks, or working in irons in the southern fields; tales that sounded like fairy stories of a time that never was and never could be, in which all men were to be set free, but not by force, nor in violent insurrection, nor by blood-shedding; and with the stories came the greater truth, for which the poor longed vaguely without understanding it, the truth of immortality and of a larger freedom among the dead, but altogether beyond death. A few of these rumours reached educated men also. A French writer of great talent has told an imaginary anecdote of Pontius Pilate, coming back to Italy when deposed from his procuratorship, full of care and trouble and tormented by political questions that were to him of vital importance. Near Baiæ, I think, he met an old friend, a reader and philosopher, and after some conversation this man asked him about Jesus, and about his condemnation to death. But Pilate's look was vague, he could not remember. 'Jesus?' he asked. 'I do not recollect the name.'

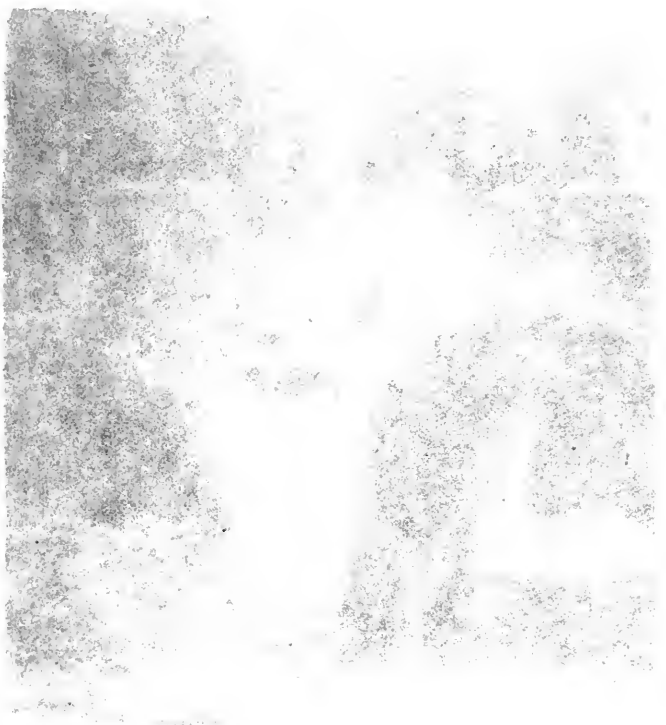
The story is the fiction of a gifted writer, designed to show how small an impression the greatest event in the world's history made upon the mind of a prosaic Roman official, preoccupied for his own reputation which was at stake; but there is a typical truth in it which makes it seem possible at first sight.

The story of the introduction of Christianity into

Sicily and the south is an inextricable confusion of truth and legend. Some say that the Apostle Peter, having founded the commonwealth of Antioch, sent out two bishops as missionaries to Sicily; and that one, who was called Pancras, came to Taormina and landed upon the beach where the first Greek colonists had drawn up their ships eight hundred years earlier. Whether this be so or not, there is little evidence and no proof; but it has been believed by many and the statue of the holy man stands upon the beach to this day. To shelter it from wind and weather, it has been moved a little inward and placed by the wall of the small church. The inscription says that it was set up in 1691 in honour of the first bishop of all Sicily, ordained by Saint Peter in the fortieth year of our Lord. The second bishop who was sent out was Martian, also saint and martyr, and he came to Syracuse and overthrew temples and built a church and wrought many wonders. In the first place he gathered together his converts in a great subterranean chamber which is beneath the church of San Giovanni near the walls of Achradina, not far from the baths of Venus, where the marvellous statue of the goddess which is in the museum of Syracuse was found among the fragments of forty-two marble columns, a hundred years ago; near to the place, too, was the synagogue of the Jews; and it is said that Saint Martian chose this spot as a convenient one from which to preach

the gospel to Jews and Gentiles alike. It is indeed a place of many holy memories, for Saint Paul came hither after his shipwreck in Malta and dwelt here three days, and hither it was said that Saint Peter himself came, on his way to Rome.

Here, too, is the burial-place of the very early Christians, and it is not now thought that it had been previously used by the Greeks. There is no city of the dead in all the world more solemn, more silent, or more suggestive of that peace which especially distinguishes Christian burial-places from all others. The Parsees' Tower of Silence, built up to represent the loneliness of the hill summit whereon the elements of man should be dissolved into the elements of the universe, is horrible with death within, and is made hideous without by flocks of vultures and loathsome birds of prey. The tombs of the Romans and the Greeks were places of gay resort upon the public way, the urns within them held a handful of ashes and a few pinches of dry dust, flowers were trained round the walls, and in the miniature gardens were set up three couches and a table for the feasts anniversary of death. Below, the road, the crowd, the chariot of the rich, the cry of the fruit-seller, the tramp of the soldier, the laughter of boys and girls. There was no peace there; there was only the evident and determined will to hide from the living the conditions of death. What Swinburne has called 'the



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lordly repose of the dead,' the peace of the body on earth, the departure of the soul to a place of refreshment, light, and peace in heaven, is a solely Christian conception. Nowhere perhaps can one so well understand what it means, as in the catacombs of Rome or Sicily, and those of Syracuse are nobler, more permanent, and, strange to say, of far greater extent.

Corridor and chamber follow each other indefinitely, each vaulted hall surrounded by deep niches, within which graves deeper still have been hollowed in the living rock. It is not the crumbling tufa of the Roman Campagna, it is the same splendid rock in which the Greeks carved the tiers of their great theatre, and in which the Romans hewed the rough tombs that border the highway above it. Here, below the surface of the earth, it is a strange sensation to be in what one may well call a city, carved in one piece out of one stone. Here and there, at first, a bright light falls through apertures in the larger chambers, each separated from the next by a dark passage lined with graves. There are graves in the rocky floor, and to the right and left, and one above another in tiers to the spring of the solid vault; and one may go on and on, without end, mile after mile, through the unexplored silence, and many believe that the passages reach even to Catania, more than thirty miles away.

Here Saint Martian lived and preached, and by

the sea-shore, not far away, it is said that he was put to death, not by heathens, but by the Jews; and that in the first place they laid him bound in a boat and set fire to it, and pushed it from the shore, but that, when they had seen that the fire had no power over him, they brought him to the beach again and strangled him.

In Taormina, Saint Pancras, says the tale, destroyed a temple by the sign of the cross, and silenced an oracle by fastening a letter upon the neck of the god's statue; and he made many converts, including the prefect of the city, and lived many years from the year 40 A.D., in which he was ordained by Saint Peter, until the year about 100, when he was martyred in the reign of Trajan.

Next after the first two missionary bishops and Saint Luke the evangelist, comes the story of Saint Paul, authentic beyond all doubt and now known to be accurate beyond all dispute. The greatest authority on navigation who has lived in this century, the late Professor Breusing, devoted much space in his work on the navigation of the ancients to a careful study of Saint Paul's voyage as described by the Apostle. The fact that Breusing was an eminent philologist as well as a mathematician and a navigator, gives great weight to his opinions and conclusions. He has demonstrated to the complete satisfaction of all mariners that Saint Paul's story is as accurate an account of

what happened to the ship on which he sailed, as could be put together from the log and dead reckon-

HARBOUR OF MALTA

ing of a modern sailing vessel on a stormy voyage. This being the case, we are obliged to admit that

the Apostle's extraordinary technical correctness must have extended to other matters spoken of in his account, and the most sceptical unbeliever cannot have the smallest ground for doubting that Saint Paul spent three days in Syracuse as he himself states. With Breusing's book in hand I have visited the little bay at the western end of Malta, 'where two seas met,' that is to say, close to the channel between Malta and Gozo, where the ship was run aground 'and the fore part stuck fast and remained unmovable, but the hinder part was broken with the violence of the waves. And the soldiers' counsel was to kill the prisoners lest any of them should swim out and escape, but the centurion, willing to save Paul, kept them from their purpose; and commanded that they which could swim should cast themselves first into the sea, and get to land: and the rest, some on boards, and some on broken pieces of the ship. And so it came to pass, that they escaped all safe to land.' Thence it was that, after spending three months in Malta, Saint Paul came to Syracuse in the *Castor and Pollux*, a ship of Alexandria that had wintered on the island.

The little Maltese cove is unchanged, and on the islet before it stands a colossal statue of the Apostle. The prudent English administration has fastened to the pedestal a notice warning visitors not to molest the rabbits. All round about, the wild 'ecballion' blooms under the summer sun, its healing root sucking the

scant nourishment it needs from the stony soil, and the ceaseless breeze fans the short wild grass that here and there can find a hold. A few fishermen land on the rocks below. It is a very lonely, quiet place, bathed in the most intense light, and as one pauses in the shadow of the great statue it is hard to fancy it as it must have been on that wild night so long ago, when the surf pounded upon the beach in the cove and the spray flew in sheets over the islet, and the Apostle, whose grotesque image is a landmark now, was in danger of being slain by the Roman soldiers lest he should swim ashore and escape; it is hard to think that it can ever have been so cold that the shipwrecked saint and the prisoners were very grateful to the fisher folk for building them a fire, before which they dried their garments and warmed themselves. But the blazing island can look black enough in winter, and most seamen would rather face the ocean in any mood than the Malta Channel in a south-west gale. Half the charm of the south is in its quick changes from wealth to poverty, from blooming garden to sun-bleached desolation, from languorous calm to sudden and destroying fury.

We must take for granted, from the results, much that concerns the spreading of Christianity in the early centuries, and which can never be known in detail. It seems certain that the new faith found very favourable ground in Sicily, and if, as some suppose,

the ultimate conversion of the island proceeded rather from Rome than directly from the East, it is nevertheless certain that Sicily was one of the first places where the influence was felt. The reason for the rapid growth of the religion in the island is not far to seek. The objection of Rome to Christianity was political, not ethic. Rome was ruled by a despotism, and Christianity was distinctly socialistic. In Rome, religion and state were very closely allied; the Romans were extremely tolerant of all forms of polytheism and theism in which they could detect a resemblance to their own religious practices and beliefs, in which a visible sacrifice was offered before the visible image of a god, and which, though not agreeing closely with their own, did not offend them. Even the Jews offered sacrifices and had a ceremonial upon which the Roman could put an interpretation, though it was a false one; and the Jews never made the smallest attempt to convert heathens to Judaism. But the Christians met in secret places, they slew no victims on their altars, they regarded all heathen sacrifices with abhorrence, they worshipped a man who had died the death of a criminal, under accusation of stirring up revolt and of blaspheming the deities of existing religions, and they whispered that all men were born free and should be equal hereafter, a tenet which seemed monstrous alike to the despot and his subjects. Looking at the matter with such

fictitious indifference as a believer can assume for the sake of argument, it is certainly not strange that the Christians should have been persecuted by the government of the Emperors. For that government had the most to fear from a general socialistic movement of the slaves and of the poor. The Romans believed, or chose to believe, that the Christians had no religion at all, but had formed a vast conspiracy for the purpose of overthrowing the government; and it is natural that this impression should have been created by men who met secretly, who used expressions that had no meaning to Roman ears, who had passwords and signs by which they recognized each other even at a distance. It cannot be supposed that an ordinary Roman of the early times could understand what a man meant by touching his forehead, his breast, his left shoulder and his right, in a word, by crossing himself. The gesture was a secret means of recognition; it did not suggest the cross to those who saw it, and if any heathens knew what it meant, it cannot have suggested anything but an adherence to the revolutionary principles they attributed to Christ, and a readiness to die the same death rather than submit to existing law and authority. Christianity, therefore, suffered much more as a secret society, suspected of being an extensive conspiracy against imperial and despotic government, than on account of the beliefs which it really inculcated; and the persecutions by

which it was sought to repress it from time to time, as it grew more powerful, proceeded from a political conviction that it had a tendency to undermine authority, and not in the least from any prejudice on the part of the Romans against a religion different from their own. Violent and cruel means were usually taken for putting down any insurrection or mutiny. When the soldiers of Mummius ran away in the battle with the gladiators under Spartacus, the general who next commanded them paraded them all on a meadow and ordered every tenth man to be beheaded on the spot. At the termination of the same war, when Pompey boasted that he finally crushed out the great rebellion, he impaled six thousand prisoners on stakes planted along the Appian way at regular intervals. After the second slave war in Sicily many of the survivors were condemned to fight with wild beasts in the circus, though they had surrendered on condition that their lives should be spared. They slew each other, and their leader took his own life, rather than submit to what seemed an ignominious death. It would be easy to multiply instances of cruelties as great as any inflicted upon the Christians, all of which appeared necessary to the Roman government on purely political grounds. The fact that the performance of a sacrifice was the usual test in the case of the Christians, and that they were in actual fact put to death for refusing to take part in such a religious ceremony, does not

affect the argument in the least. The martyrs indeed refused to sacrifice on purely religious grounds, but the Romans condemned them to death with a purely political purpose. The fact of the refusal had no religious significance in the eyes of the judges; it was merely an irrefragable proof that the accused really and truly belonged to a great organization, of which all the members were supposed to be bound by the most solemn oaths to die rather than to submit to authority in that shape. An almost exactly parallel case has happened in Russia, in our times, when a Christian sect bound itself not long ago to refuse any military service whatsoever, because all war, for which all military service is intended, is contrary to the spirit of Christianity. The Russian government naturally refused to regard the matter in the same light, and severe penalties were inflicted upon men who were convinced that they were suffering something like martyrdom for a religious cause, by a government which was equally persuaded that they wished to defy its authority. The logic of these facts, while it demonstrates that a very unfair amount of odium has fallen upon the imperial government of Rome for its action with regard to Christianity, does not in the least detract from the glory of those who suffered. Moreover, as has doubtless occurred in almost every country where it has been thought necessary to enforce unusual and rigorous measures, it often happened that the officials

who were designated to execute them made use of their power to satisfy their lust, their greed, or their desire for vengeance, and that those whom they condemned became the victims not only of their own devotion to their faith, as well as of political necessity, but also of the passions that individually animated their unscrupulous judges. It may well be doubted whether the most enlightened government would tolerate the existence of a secret organization of such dimensions and importance as were attained by Christianity in the early centuries of the Empire, if that organization manifested its beliefs by refusing to conform with some generally accepted regulation or practice.

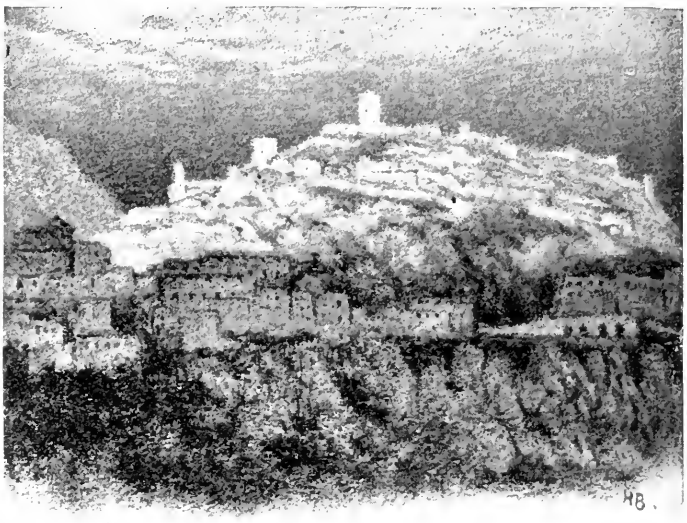
Justice therefore requires that, without at all depreciating the merit of those early Christians who suffered themselves to be torn to pieces and tortured in a thousand ways for the true faith, we should also admit that the government which inflicted such sufferings was acting, to the best of its knowledge, for the preservation of law and order.

But, as in all cases where an elaborate system for the maintenance of power throughout an immense territory comes into conflict with a movement directed and sustained by the mainsprings of human nature, the latter was destined to get the mastery in the end, and in the course of a few centuries the whole Roman Empire was practically Christianized. The most remarkable fact in connexion with this universal

change of belief is that, although a great number of Christians were at one time or another put to death, there was at no period of the development any open struggle which could be called a religious war, such as devastated Europe in the sixteenth century, when kingdoms and principalities that believed more or less the same things fought each other to the death because they chose to believe the same things in different ways. After Constantine had accepted Christianity without imposing it by force, Julian the Apostate rejected it without proscribing it or persecuting it. Neither Mary of England nor Elizabeth acted with such moderation under similar circumstances. Constantine was too wise and good a Christian, sentimental though he was and always remained, to shed innocent blood in the hope of spreading the gospel of peace; Julian understood the nature of Christianity too well to suspect it of being a conspiracy against the Empire. The unbeliever did not exhibit the senseless rage of the Puritan and Huguenot iconoclasts; the believer was far above the bigotry of a Catherine de' Medici or a Philip the Second.

It is not necessary to depreciate the qualities, such as they were, which made Rome's domination a means of civilizing the known world, in order to exalt the merits of the Christian martyrs, whose constancy to an absolutely pure faith and whose sufferings in its cause justly earned them the title of the Holy for all

time; any more than it would be just to disparage the saintliness of many who, in later ages, would have borne as much for the same cause, if it had been condemned to the same persecution. Christianity was most persecuted in those centres of the vast Empire



AMANTEA, WESTERN CALABRIA

where it was believed to be a source of greatest danger to the government; and while many suffered, many also took refuge in the quiet of the provinces, so that it is not unreasonable to believe that a great number of Christians escaped to Sicily after the great persecution of Nero; and if they were not the founders of the Church in the island, they were probably the

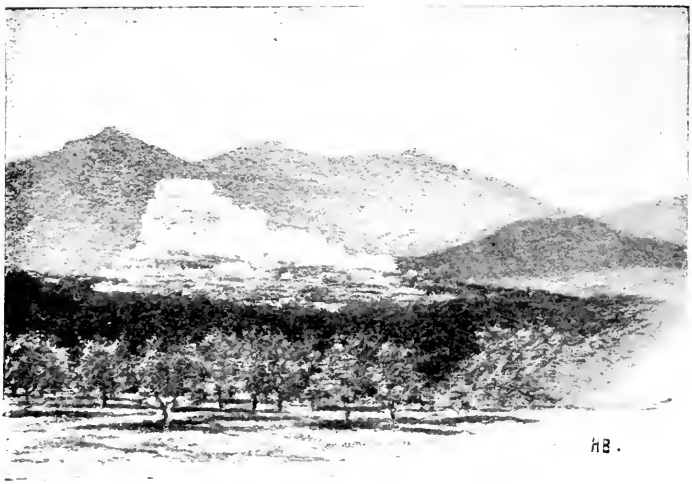
first active propagators of the faith who laboured there. We hear of a number of atrocious martyrdoms in Sicily, it is true. The heartrending stories of Saint Agatha and Saint Lucy are too horrible to be told; but the atrocities therein recorded are referable directly to the evil passions of corrupt officials, and do not seem to have formed parts of extensive persecutions. The laws against Christians often remained inactive for long periods at a time, and were then suddenly unearthed from obscurity and put into force by governors and prefects as a means of extorting money, or of gratifying worse desires, precisely as happened many centuries later in Christian Europe with regard to the laws against the Jews. The first Sicilian martyrdoms of which there is a certain record known to me took place in 164, under Marcus Aurelius, who was certainly not a persecutor. The martyrs were Victor and Corona. The next fell under Decius, about 250, when Saint Agatha and three others were put to death. In Diocletian's reign, and therefore at least as late as 284, seventy-five Christians were martyred in Sicily; in 307 took place the horrible tragedy of Saint Lucy in Syracuse, and Saint Nympha was executed in 310, after which no further martyrdoms are recorded. Compared with the wholesale butcheries of Christians in Rome such a list is insignificant, including as it does eighty victims in the space of one hundred and forty-six years.

It is not hard to understand that during the long peace enjoyed by Sicily, which extended practically from the beginning of our era to the year 440, the island should have been completely and homogeneously Christianized. About the year 280 Syracuse was plundered by a body of roving Franks who had stolen a few Roman men of war, but it was not till a hundred and sixty years later that Sicily was laid waste by the Vandals under Genseric. The West Goths had already taken possession of Italy. Alaric had thrice successfully besieged Rome, and at last had sacked the city; and then, by southern Cosenza, he had suddenly died, and his men had buried him in the bed of the river and had turned the stream again over his resting-place. He was a Christian, but an Arian. Had he lived, he would have conquered Sicily and his rule might have been good, for in peace he was just and merciful. But Sicily fell to Genseric, another Arian who came over from Africa, breathing religious hatred against Christians of all other denominations. The heresy of Arius called into question the equality of God the Son with God the Father; the orthodox bishops had condemned it, and the followers of its originator longed for revenge. The result was a persecution of the orthodox Christians such as perhaps did not take place in Sicily under the Empire. Theodosius, indeed, made an effort to rescue the island, but the Huns were upon him, and he turned away to defend dominions nearer

home. The Arian Vandals retired, leaving destruction behind them, and when, on their way to plunder Rome itself, they attempted to land in Sicily a second time, they were repulsed. But not for long. In 456 they fought a great battle against the Romans near Girgenti and were beaten; yet the peace that had followed did not save Sicily from further devastations. A few years later Genseric overcame and destroyed the Byzantine fleet, and it was not until the Vandals had laid waste all the coasts of Italy and Sicily during seven years more, and had possessed themselves of a large part of the island, that peace ensued at last. It was not even a peace between the invaders and the Empire, for the Empire was dying in the feeble hands of the last Emperor of the West, whose name, Romulus Augustulus, seemed to recall Rome's regal and imperial beginnings, and to denote her fall in the puerile diminutive terminations. The peace was concluded between Vandals and Goths, between Genseric and Odoacer, who agreed to pay the Vandals a yearly sum, as it were, for the use of Sicily as a granary.

With this peace of 475 the story of the Romans reaches its natural conclusion, since there was to be no Rome again in the old sense for many years, not even when Charles the Great had gathered together the fragments of broken tradition, the remnants of forgotten glory, and the shreds of dismembered empire, to weld and solidify the whole into something

that was to last a thousand years, which was to call itself the Holy Roman Empire, but which was never again to rule the world from the Palace of the Cæsars. The next Rome was to be the Rome of the popes. About five hundred years elapsed between the flight of Sextus Pompeius and the peaceable acces-



ROCCA IMPERIALE, EASTERN CALABRIA

sion of Odoacer the East Goth. During that time Sicily had for the most part remained in her old tributary position as the granary in chief to the capital; and the far descendants of the slaves who had ploughed and sown the land for Rome, in the days of Augustus, were Christian bondsmen tilling the same soil for a Gothic king. The moral change

had been profound and enduring, the material difference in the conditions of the population in the one period and in the other was insignificant. Christianity was a moral force, but not then a practical civilizer. Its spreading had been accompanied by a retrogression which it had not caused, but which it was powerless to hinder, and with the stern Roman rule, which had so often tried in vain to stamp the new faith out of existence, there had disappeared also the Roman organization and discipline, and orderly distribution of wealth, which, by their civilizing influence, should go far to redeem the empire from the contempt of modern times, if not from the execration of ecclesiastical writers.

Until the Vandal invasion the island was not less fertile than before, and the depredations of Genseric's horde can only have produced one of those temporary interruptions in the agricultural activity of the country which I have more than once compared to a suspension of work in a great factory. But the cities had suffered much and continually, ever since Verres had carried off their treasures and stolen their wealth, and with the gradual diminution of superfluous ready money, the power of beautifying the cities had diminished and disappeared; a further reduction of resources had made it impossible to restore monuments and public buildings which had been injured by time; and at last the total absence of means had

resulted in that state of things which any one may see at the present day in the Ottoman Empire. As in Constantinople in our own times, so it was in Syracuse, in Palermo, in Girgenti, and in Messina, in the days of the Gothic kingdom. For lack of ready money, the Turk looks on indifferently, while some of the most beautiful buildings now existing fall to pieces from sheer neglect, while a fleet of modern war-ships rusts and rots at anchor in the Golden Horn, while an empire which should be fertile lies fallow for lack of capital. If Cicero found the tomb of Archimedes hidden in a wilderness of brambles, it needs no lively fancy to imagine what Syracuse had become in the days of Odoacer the Goth. It was the duty of Sicily to raise corn, and it was her only business to see that it was safely shipped to Italian ports. She had become accustomed to a condition of servitude in which her labour was as poorly paid as was consistent with the existence of her population; she sent out merchandise by the thousand shiploads, but had neither the power to exact payment for it nor to refuse what was demanded of her. The cities became mere places for embarking cargo, safe harbours lined with docks and quays, the almost imperishable work of Roman engineers, surrounded by granaries that were sometimes beautiful disused temples, by the offices of the corn-factors, and by the miserable habitations of the dock slaves, longshoremen, and sailors, who did

the work of the port. From time to time, perhaps, a strolling company of Greek players gathered a little audience in the theatre where Dionysius, Hiero, and the beautiful Philistis had listened to the deathless verses of Sophocles and Euripides; and the poor actors gave garbled versions of great plays that were ill tolerated by the heathen-hating bishops, but which perhaps touched the long-lost chords of memory in those who heard. For the most part the theatre was deserted, and the grass grew in the wide market-place round the ruins of Timoleon's tomb. Christianity, bred in the subterranean galleries and chambers of Achradina, had risen to the surface like a young plant in spring, and stretching out its tendrils, was appropriating to itself all that it found in its way; it was turning temples into churches, and race-tracks into cemeteries, and theatres into places of public prayer; but as yet it had not come to its flowering nor acquired an outward æsthetic beauty of its own. Where cities were going to decay, faith alone was not able to rebuild them, and the Church was content to lead a peaceable and austere existence among ruins.

The business of Sicily was not commerce in the true sense, and brought with it none of the rewards of commercial enterprise. It was the business of supply carried on under compulsion and without profit. Yet it did not at any time wholly cease; the value of

the island to him who could hold it was, potentially, as great as ever; Sicily never became a desolate and fever-stricken waste like the Roman Campagna, the Pontine marshes, or the plain where Sybaris once bridged the river. The Greeks had made it, the Romans had used it, barbarians and pirates of many lands had plundered it, but its vitality was indestructible, and the springs of its ever renewed prosperity could not be dried up. It was yet to be, what it had been for more than a thousand years, the garden of the Mediterranean, the chief jewel in Italy's crown, and the coveted possession and treasure of each race that strove for it and held it for a while against the world.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

VOLUME I

B.C.	
1200 (about)	Farming developed by the Sicelians.
800 (about)	Cumæ founded by the Greeks.
735	Naxos founded by the Chalcidians.
734	Syracuse founded by the Corinthians.
721	Sybaris founded by the Achæans.
715	Crotona founded by the Achæans.
708	Tarentum founded by Spartans, called Partheniæ.
700 (about)	Catania, Leontini, and Zancle founded by Chalcidians and Ionians.
700 (about)	Megara Hyblæa founded by the Dorians.
700 (about)	Rhegium founded by the Messenians.
700 (about)	Metapontum, Poseidonia, and Terina founded by the Achæans.
700 (about)	Selinus founded by Dorians from Megara.
690	Gela founded by Dorians from Rhodes.
648	Himera founded by Ionians.
580	Akragas founded by Dorians.
570 (about)	Pythagoras born at Samos.
485	Gelon becomes tyrant of Syracuse.
480	Hamilcar of Carthage besieges Himera.
478	Hiero succeeds Gelon as tyrant of Syracuse.
473	Pindar visits the court of Hiero.
468	Death of Hiero and accession of Thrasybulus.
467	Simonides dies at Syracuse.

B.C.

465 . . . . Syracuse, Akragas, etc., become independent commonwealths.

461 . . . . Ducetius heads a rising of Sicelians.

456 . . . . Æschylus dies at Gela.

415 . . . . Athenian expedition against Syracuse, led by Nicias, Alcibiades, and Lamachus.

413 . . . . The Syracusans, led by Gylippus the Spartan, defeat the Athenians.

409 . . . . The Carthaginians, led by the second Hannibal, take Selinus and Himera.

406 . . . . Hermocrates returns from exile, and is killed at Syracuse.

406 . . . . Hannibal dies of the plague, and Akragas surrenders to his father Himilcon.

405 . . . . Dionysius becomes tyrant of Syracuse.

397 . . . . Dionysius declares war against Carthage.

395 . . . . Dionysius defeats the Carthaginians and destroys their fleet.

367 . . . . Death of Dionysius, and accession of his son, Dionysius II.

356 . . . . Dionysius II. dethroned by his brother-in-law, Dion.

353 . . . . Dion assassinated by Callippus.

346 . . . . Second tyranny of Dionysius II.

343 . . . . Timoleon deposes Dionysius II. and interrupts the tyranny.

339 . . . . Timoleon defeats the Carthaginians.

337 . . . . Death of Timoleon.

317 . . . . Agathocles makes himself tyrant.

289 . . . . Death of Agathocles.

287 . . . . Archimedes born.

278 . . . . Pyrrhus, called in by the Syracusans, defeats the Carthaginians.

276 . . . . Pyrrhus leaves Sicily.

B.C.

270 . . . . Hiero II. made king of Syracuse.

270 (about) . Theocritus is at the court of Hiero.

265 . . . . The Mamertines appeal from Messina to Rome for aid.

264 . . . . First Punic war begins, called in Rome "the Sicilian war."

262 . . . . The Romans besiege Akragas, thenceforth known as Agrigentum.

260 . . . . First Roman fleet built.

255 . . . . The Romans, led by Regulus, are totally defeated by the Carthaginians.

254 . . . . The Romans take Drepanon, thenceforth known as Drepanum.

253 . . . . The Romans lose a fleet.

242 . . . . The Romans take Lilybæum.

215 . . . . Hiero II. dies, and is succeeded by his grandson, Hieronymus.

213 . . . . The Romans massacre the inhabitants of Henna.

212 . . . . Syracuse taken by Marcellus.

212 . . . . Archimedes slain by a common soldier after the fall of Syracuse.

210 . . . . The Romans take Agrigentum, and Sicily becomes a Roman province.

202 . . . . Scipio of Africa assembles his fleet at Lilybæum before the battle of Zama.

139 . . . . Sicilian slaves revolt against the Romans.

132 . . . . Publius Rupilius, the consul, puts down the first servile insurrection.

104 . . . . Insurrection in Campania led by the knight Vettius.

99 . . . . Manlius Aquillius, the consul, finally crushes out the servile revolts.

79 . . . . Cicero is quæstor in Sicily.

73 . . . . Verres obtains the proprætorship of Sicily by lot.

B.C.

70 . . . . Verres is tried in Rome, and retires to Marseilles.

47 . . . . Julius Cæsar assembles his fleet at Lilybæum for his African campaign.

43 . . . . Sextus Pompeius becomes master of all Sicily.

39 . . . . Treaty between Sextus Pompeius, Octavian, and Mark Antony signed at Baiæ.

36 . . . . Sextus Pompeius expelled by Octavian.

21 . . . . Augustus, formerly Octavian, visits Sicily.

A.D.

40 . . . . Saint Pancras, first bishop of Sicily, said to have been ordained by Saint Peter.

126 . . . . Hadrian visits Sicily.

164 . . . . Saint Victor and Saint Corona martyred under Marcus Aurelius.

252 . . . . Saint Agatha and three others martyred by the prætor Quintianus.

280 . . . . Syracuse plundered by roving Franks.

284 . . . . Seventy-five Christians martyred under Diocletian.

307 . . . . Saint Lucy martyred at Syracuse under Galerius.

310 . . . . Saint Nympha martyred under Galerius.

410 . . . . Alaric the Goth dies at Cosenza in Calabria.

440 . . . . Sicily laid waste by the Vandals under Genseric.

456 . . . . The Vandals defeated by the Romans near Agrigentum.

475 . . . . Peace concluded between the Vandals and Goths under Genseric and Odoacer.

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